Daily Report

Latin America

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Honduran Concern Over Reports of Chemical Weapons

PA1203215591 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1543 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 12 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—The Honduran Government expressed concern today over U.S. reports which say that Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua have chemical weapons.

Honduran Foreign Minister Mario Carias told the press that "there is concern because these types of weapons introduce a different factor in the types of armaments a country may possess." The use of chemical weapons affects "combatants, the population, and the environment," Carias said.

He added that at the next Security Commission meeting of the Esquipulas II peace accords, to be held in Managua late this month, he will ask his counterparts from Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua whether their countries have chemical weapons.

According to a U.S. Navy study, these three Central American countries are included on a long list of nations that have chemical weapons.

Honduras thinks that the use of weapons of mass destruction should be banned in Central America.

Guatemala Denies Possession

PA1303201091 Guatemala City EL GRAFICO in Spanish 13 Mar 91 p 6

[By Carlos Garcia Urrea]

[Text] Guatemala, 13 March 1991—On the afternoon of 12 March, Colonel Homero Garcia, the chief of the Information and Press Department of the Army, firmly and flatly denied that the Army has any type of chemical weapons.

The Army spokesman was asked about a report by several international news agencies, including ACAN-EFE, REUTER, and NOTIMEX. All the news agencies cited statements made by the Honduran Foreign Minister concerning information he had received from the U.S. Navy. This information indicated that Guatemala, El Salvador, and Nicaragua could have chemical weapons, and the minister expressed Honduras' concern over this.

Col. Garcia informed EL GRAFICO that perhaps the information given to Honduras refers to weapons held by the rebels and not to the regular forces (the Army). He said the United States knows exactly what types of weapons each Central American army possesses. Guatemala's weapons, he added, are very limited and the Armed Forces do not even receive military aid. The Guatemalan Army is a totally defensive one. It does not have the resources to modernize its equipment, much less buy high-technology equipment, such as chemical weapons. This would be totally out of budget, the officer asserted, unless the tear gas bombs used by the police to disperse demonstrations are considered "chemical weapons."

Cuba

Commentary on U.S. Policy in Middle East

FL1303181091 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0100 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Commentary via telephone by correspondent Miguel Rivero from Prague during "Exclusivo" program—live]

[Text] Good evening, "Exclusivo" friends. The great political, economic, and diplomatic chess game is going at great speed in the Middle East. U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, turned into proconsul of the new order, is proud of building the so-called U.S. peace for the Middle East.

The first goal is obvious; any international conference dealing with this issue should be prevented. The United States does not want and does not need it. It is playing the direct role of mediator and judge in its own case.

According to the White House's measuring stick, now Arabs are divided into decent and indecent people. They all used to be indecent. The decent ones now form part of the coalition in the war against Iraq headed by the United States. The indecent, suspicious, or little trustworthy were the ones who criticized the United States or refused to sent troops to fight the Iraqis.

Everything seems to indicated that Washington is getting ready to launch the classic game with its ally and guard in the area, Israel. The game consists of appearing as though Israel is being pressured to give certain concessions when in reality the intention is [words indistinct] in the Middle East the policy of creating a new Palestinian Bantustan. It is a matter of giving some autonomy to the Palestinians. Some are even saying that Jordan's King Husayn could lose power to give way to a new Palestinian entity.

Of course, Israel does not intend to give up the Arab territories occupied in 1967. There is enthusiasm with the idea of being able to gradually expel the Palestinians from those territories. To where? It would not be a bad idea if they could send them to neighboring Jordan. Evidence that the Israeli Government is publicly supporting this is that a minister who publicly supported this idea is now part of the new Israeli cabinet. The other maneuver consists of speaking with certain Palestinians but not recognizing the PLO and its top leaders.

In sum, the main goals of Secretary Baker appear to be that of sowing dissent, discouragement, and division. Some in the region, consciously or unconsciously, are playing his game.

Escalona Meets With Visiting Soviet Deputies

FL1403024791 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Text] Juan Escalona Reguera, president the National Assembly of the People's Government [ANPP], has held a meeting with Soviet deputies.

The Soviet legislators, who are members of the USSR Supreme Soviet Health Commission, are visiting Cuba to attend the third International Primary Health Care Conference that is being held at the Palace of Conventions in Havana.

The Soviet deputies will exchange information on the current situation in Cuba and the Soviet Union and the development of bilateral legislative ties. [sentence as heard]

Radio Quotes USSR's Lukyanov on Referendum

FL1303162091 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1255 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Telephone report by correspondent Andrey Ayoshin in Moscow—live]

[Text] Anatoliy Lukyanov, chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, stated in a newspaper interview published this morning that he trusts the wisdom of the Soviet people and that they will manage to determine if they need the dissolution of the country or the preservation of a multiethnic and powerful state.

Lukyanov condemned the political forces that are trying to stop the national referendum on the future of the federation scheduled for 17 March. He said that some people want to distort the purpose of the referendum by making it appear as a question of trust in authorities at a national level. He pointed out that it is not a matter of an alleged absolute central power.

According to the new Union agreement, the Union will be composed of sovereign and independent states. Lukyanov said that the purpose of the referendum is to strengthen justice and guarantee human rights and equality for all ethnic groups in the USSR.

Discipline Crisis in Bulgarian Military Noted

FL1303181991 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 1500 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] News reports, based on sources from the Defense Department in Sofia, revealed today that the Bulgarian Army is experiencing a grave discipline crisis, including serious crimes. Defense Minister General Yordan Mutafchiev submitted a report showing a change of attitude of military personnel toward duty. It is Gen. Mutafchiev's opinion that this is due to deteriorating emotional and moral values.

The report, read during an Armed Forces national conference, points out that 3,000 crimes, including 56 murders, were reported within the military during 1990. According to the pro-government newspaper OTECHESTVEN VESTNIK, the data reflected in the report leads to the conclusion that the current political changes in Bulgaria have caused the discipline crisis in the Armed Forces.

Castro Opens Youth Computer Center 7 Mar

PA1403144191 Havana Cubavision Television in Spanish 0308 GMT 10 Mar 91

[Speech, including dialogue with members of the audience, by Cuban President Fidel Castro at the opening of

the Youth Club Computer and Electronics Center in Havana on 7 March—recorded]

[Text] [Castro] Can you hear me?

[Crowd] Yes.

[Castro] Where is my friend? The other one. Come over here. You go here and you here. You are the one who has the information. You said we had 106 Youth Computer Clubs.

[Speaker] There are 106 Youth Computer Clubs at this time.

[Castro] What do you mean by at this time?

[Speaker] Some are under construction and others will be built.

[Castro] Of course, you think they are very important. What is your impression? Have you learned a lot from these Youth Computer Clubs? Have you found that they are useful?

[Speaker] Quite a bit.

[Castro] How would you be doing if you did not have the Youth Computer Clubs?

[Speaker] Well, I spend my life here.

[Castro] You would be without life. Is that not true? You spend your life here.

[Speaker] I come over here right after school.

[Castro] You come over here. How are the rest of your grades?

[Speaker] They are good.

[Castro] Very well. Do you have more information? You already talked about Remate de Guane where there is a Youth Computer Club.

[Speaker] Yes, there is a Youth Computer Club over there. You said somewhere in a speech—I do not remember where—that a Youth Computer Club could be opened there.

[Castro] Yes, of course. The idea is to have one per municipality.

[Speaker] Yes, there is one in Pinar del Rio.

[Castro] Are they all ready in Pinar del Rio, Robertico?

[Roberto Robaina, president of the Union of Young Communists, UJC] Pinar del Rio is the first province which is going to have all its clubs but they are not finished yet. They will be all completed soon.

[Castro] Right. I believe that....

[Speaker, interrupting] Do you know how many machines we have operating here? We have 93 machines with [words indistinct] cards.

[Castro] I am going to tell you. We have 82 standard machines.

[Speaker] I am referring to the total number of machines.

[Castro] There are eight KT. What are they called?

[Speaker] AT.

[Castro] AT. What about the others? Two?

[Speaker] The other ones are XT.

[Castro] XT.

[Speaker] It is 0-based technology and AT is the advanced one.

[Castro] You have 92 machines now, 92. How many machines does a standard Youth Computer Club have?

[Speaker] Well, eight or 10.

[Castro] Another question. How many kids does a standard Youth Computer Club provide services to? How many kids visit them each week?

[Speaker] Everyone in the entire neighborhood who has the opportunity to go goes.

[Castro] A lot of young people?

[Speaker] Well, before I attended this one I used to go to the one in Playa. Since I cooperated with the workers.

[Castro] Yes. A lot of kids who did not know about computers go there and they have learned about computers and programming.

[Speaker] There is one around here who started at the one in Playa when it opened and now knows quite a bit about programming.

[Castro] Of course. I think that what you have said saves me a lot of what I have to say here about the importance of this movement. Is this called Youth Computer Club? Youth Computer Club Movement? Well, you explained how it began. Was it approximately two years ago that we visited the place?

[Speaker] No. You visited in April of 1989.

[Castro] April 1989.

[Speaker] It has not been two years yet.

[Castro] In 1990? It has not been two years yet?

[Speaker] Almost.

[Castro] When was the first Youth Computer Club inaugurated?

[Speaker] Three years ago. I believe it was in August. It was either on 10 October or in August.

[Castro] Robertico, when was the first one inaugurated?

[Robaina] On 29 April 1989.

[Castro] Was that the first one?

[Speaker] No, it was when you went there.

[Castro] Well, I went there but you had already organized a Youth Computer Club.

[Robaina] The first one opened in November 1987.

[Castro] You organized a Youth Computer Club but was this not started at the Cuba Pavillion?

[Robaina] In July and August of 1987.

[Castro] In July and August of 1987. It has been four years. This is when I had the first news of the Youth Computer Club. I was interested in the Youth Computer Clubs right away.

[Robaina] You read it in the paper.

[Castro] What?

[Robaina] You read the results in the paper.

[Castro] I read them in the paper and realized that the creation of the Youth Computer Club was an extraordinary idea.

We had been struggling with the introduction of computers in universities and in mid-level education centers, that is, pre-universities and pedagogic schools. We intended to get to secondary schools. I believe that we have computers up to the secondary school level today.

[Speaker] I believe there are already two machines in secondary schools.

[Castro] Of course. A good number of rooms were built at the exact sciences schools. When I saw that the UJC had created this institution and generated a lot of interest among the children and young people, I realized that it was a brilliant idea. I contacted the UJC and offered all the necessary cooperation to extend that idea and take the Youth Computer Clubs to all the provinces—this was the first idea—and to the main cities in the country. Do you remember, Robertico, how many there where? The first ones.

[Robaina] There were 35 at first.

[Castro] Why were there so many?

[Robaina] Because of the capitals, the municipalities of Havana City.

[Castro] Yes, because if you put one in Bayamo you have to put another one in Manzanillo because if not there is war. If one is placed in Moron you have to put another one in Ciego.

[Robaina] Matanzas and Cardenas.

[Castro] Of course. We also put one at the municipalities of the capital, the 15 municipalities of the capital.

[Robaina] Those were the 35 of the initial plan.

[Castro] This is how the story of the 35 got started. Many people had to be won over. A plan was made. When was the Youth Computer Club plan done?

[Robaina] After your meeting with us in October 1987.

[Castro] In October 1987. A pretty project was planned.

[Robaina] The projects with various scale models were made so that they were not all the same. The construction phase began in February 1988.

[Castro] The construction phase began. It was a matter of having the buildings, of having the provinces and the municipalities help us in the construction of the buildings or in adapting houses. This is how we started the first 35. Everything new always requires some persuasion. We also had to work a bit, not in the financial aspect because we had the resources, but some institution made commitments to produce the computers, provide us with the computers in a short period of time. In reality we lost a little bit of time because there were difficulties with the computers or some of their components, some of the parts of the system of each of the Youth Computer Clubs. This was the first problem, the first obstacle we enocuntered. This is why it took us a while to build the first 35.

Later, we had the idea, we had the aspiration of having one per municipality. It was no longer one per province or large city, but we wanted to have a Youth Computer Club in each municipality in the country. This started another new stage in which the UJC had to make efforts so that they could get the installations built and so that houses were adapted and the problems got solved. Not all the provinces had the same attitude. They did not find the same understanding in all the provinces. Some realized more quickly than others the importance of the institution and others picked up on it more slowly.

Our dreams of continuing to expand the network continued. Let us say that a Havana municipality could need two or three because there are 200,000 inhabitants. Some Havana municipalities have almost the same number of inhabitants as a small province. After the goal of reaching one per municipality was reached we wanted to complete the network with some 250 Youth Computer Clubs. That was the idea.

We already have 106, as he says. Are the ones in the province already operating?

[Speaker] Yes, yes.

[Castro] They are adapting houses or building installations. Now we have to find the equipment for the next 50. We will have 156, more or less. We will have clubs in the entire country. Is that not so?

[Robaina] We will have clubs in the entire country.

[Castro] This year?

[Robaina] During the first half of the year.

[Castro] In this first half of the year if we get the machines.

[Robaina] Some municipalities such as Cienfuegos and Plaza need two or three.

[Castro] If we get the machines we would have Youth Computer Clubs in all the municipalities.

Look at the Artemisa girl who learned to operate a computer. We will later.... [changes thought] For now, we plan to have 250 Youth Computer Clubs; 250 Youth Computer Clubs is quite a force. We will have them in all corners of the country. They will provide an extraordinary service to the country.

I have found people who graduated from the university 10 years ago, outstanding professionals such as architects and engineers, who did not have computers in the universities in their time. Anyone can understand that one cannot live without computers today, one cannot advance without computers, and no country can develop without computers.

I remember seeing some expositions on equipment for projects. Some projects which require 60 hours of work, calculations that require 60 hours of work, can be done by machines in two hours and sometimes in one hour. This means that the capabilities of a planner can be multiplied by 20, 25, 30, or 40. You can see what it means in terms of the speeding up of a project. Time is often lost in a project because the planning requires a lot of time. I am giving you an example. Those architects and engineers studied in the university when there were no computers.

Fortunately, there are computers at all levels of higher- and mid-level education. No decision has been made yet on primary education because we still do not have the certainty of whether it is convenient to take them to primary schools. Views on this are developing. If analysis shows that it is convenient to introduce computers in primary schools, we will introduce elements of computers in primary schools.

Robertico, the only thing that we need to do is to arrive at the conclusion that we have to analyze this with the pedagogic centers and with the Education Ministry. We will see if by gathering international information and views we can reach the conclusion this year that we need to also take computers to primary schools, if not to the first or second grade, at least to the fourth, fifth, and sixth grade.

For example, this girl showed us that she can handle the machine and that she can do things with it within her limits. I do not believe this is going to harm her. I am certain that it is helping her to develop knowledge. It helps her to prepare for the future. I do not know if there will be a fear that they will not learn how to add, divide, and multiply. Of course, this was one of the first things that we were taught in our times: to add, substract, divide, and multiply, or multiply and divide. We were later taught to figure out the square root and all those strange things.

I learned them. Instead of sending me to school they gave me one of those notebooks with a red cover which had all the tables in the back. I learned them all. I later had the privilege of having an inspector at a Jesuit school who had the habit—he was the inspector for the boarder students.... [changes thought] His punishment—I received different types of punishment because, because [repeats] I do not know why. [laughter] There were no popular tribunals then. All of a sudden—he was not the mathematician—he asked me to write 1,000 times—this was on a day that one felt like taking a vacation, when one felt like resting, like on a Saturday morning, or when one has an hour to play sports—I was asked to write 1,000 times: I should not talk in class, [laughter] I should not talk while standing in line; I should not do this or that. They ruined my penmanship because, imagine, if you have to write something 1,000 times. The only thing I thought about was to use three pencils. I wrote quickly: I should not talk in class and [talks gibberish]. I wasted a lot of paper. The paper I wasted writing—I should not talk in class, while standing on line, and who knows how many other things—was the paper we need during the special period.

That did not teach me anything. It was forced on me. I did the work of a slave. This inspector—he was a brother and not a priest—had another method. This one assigned me 50 or 100 math exercises. They were 50 division exercises. They were the ones that had nine figures in the dividend—is this what it is called? Is the one here called the dividend? The one over here is the divisor. What is the one left on the bottom called? What? The remainder. Why do you not remember that? [laughter] That inspector had his tricks. You could not cheat. You could not just fill out numbers because he had a trick to see if one had figured it out correctly.

If you added the dividend it totalled nine. I do not know. Say 27, if you added seven and two it totalled nine; or 36, six and three is nine. The divisor also totalled nine. The remainder totalled nine. I do not know if some mathematicians present here or if a computer can explain why. All had to total nine. He would discover right away if you wrote things that totaled nine. So, you had no other choice than to figure it out and without computers. Do you see how lucky you are? [laughter] Yes, without a calculator or anything of the sort.

He asked me to calculate 50 exercises. Naturally, I had to figure them out quickly because if not there would be no time for games or anything. A week would not go by without having to figure out 50 and up to 100 exercises. I thank this inspector for this because I learned to calculate figures quickly. I calculate figures very quickly without a calculator.

At one time I was given one of those small calculators and I used it, but I usually calculate figures without a calculator.

[Speaker] All of them?

[Castro] Well, almost all of them, but not all. No, you might give me a figure that I may not be able to calculate now. I calculate all types of figures, formulas, and calculations. It is a habit. It is a mental habit. I believe all that helped me a lot. This is why I have been able to survive without computers.

[Speaker] Sometimes punishment teaches.

[Castro] What?

[Speaker] Sometimes punishment teaches.

[Castro] Yes, that punishment truly taught me. Do not believe that I was very happy about calculating those figures, but in the end I believe that taught me to calculate figures quickly and I manage without a calculator. I understand very well, however, the importance of computers in everything, in everything. Fortunately, I have an idea, I believe I have a very clear idea of the enormous importance it has.

I was telling you this, I was showing how it increases the productivity of man's intellectual work. No modern country can live without computers. This is a reality. No university-level professional can exist without knowing about computers. There can be no mid-level technician who does not know about computers. This is the reality. I realized this when they established the first Youth Computer Club and saw that there was an enormous potential there. Above all, the way it caught the interest of the young people, adolescents, and children caught my attention.

I said: We already have computers in the higher- and mid-levels. Of course, we were talking a while ago about whether we should take computers to the primary school level and that some may fear that they might not learn how to add and divide and that all would want to figure things out with calculators.

If you ask me, I believe we should know how to calculate figures in our head. We should not accommodate the mind to make any calculation with a machine because we do not carry a machine in our pocket everywhere, all day. I believe that all those rules I learned with the notebook make people develop their minds aside from all the things I am told or other new methods. Everyone should know how to multiply and divide. In my opinion, if people did not know how to do this there would be a loss.

I believe that computers can be perfectly combined with the teaching of those mind exercise techniques so that one does not depend on the machine. We need to reach this level as soon as possible so that we can begin to work at these levels as a way of teaching, as part of an education program.

I was telling you that we had already taken computers to the university and mid-level education but there was a big gap: all those university-level professionals who went to the university when computers were not taught. The Youth Computers Club is a great way to get those professionals to learn about computers. They will be able to fill the gap. It is a great way to get adolescents and young people interested in computers. It is a great way for children.... [changes thought] It is also a means of recreation. It is a healthy way to pass time. It helps the child develop his knowledge and abilities.

I said: This Youth Computer Club idea is a brilliant one. We need to support it and find the resources from wherever possible. We need to support this UJC idea. I believe this idea is already a success today. I believe that at the end of this year—in spite of the special period—we are going to have our Youth Computer Clubs in all municipalities this year, in 1991. This is a success. Now we need to strengthen it. We need to reach 250 or 300. The figure will be dictated by the situation.

I am happy with the idea that our people master computers. I have been able to see the incredible interest adolescents and young people in the whole world have in computers. It is incredible, fabulous. It is one of the great achievements of modern science. We have to master computers if we want to be the country we are going to be, if we want to master science, if we want to go far on the path of the revolution and socialism. Youth Computer Clubs will play a very important role in this, aside from the fact that we go to the lower educational levels in line with what we said before.

One day I visited the thing that was over there. What was it called? It was next to the radio center, where we were going to build the palace.

[Speaker] The Central Youth Center.

[Castro] Was that the same day of the visit? It was there, in that little house. The idea came about to build the Youth Computers Club Palace one day. The idea came about. I said: Start working on it. That place appears to be good. Start working with the planners so that they plan a palace, I said. That is the story. We thought about building the main computer palace one day. Things began to get complicated. The special period came and we asked ourselves where were we going to get the resources. We had to prioritize a number of other things. I wondered when we would be able to build our central computer palace.

A very good situation came up. The special period itself gave us this. Some of these establishments—where a lot of times workers cannot go and the others go—caused conflicts and problems. One day we decided to close this parallel market commercial center. He [the speaker] says he had never been here. He never had the time to come here. So, the parallel market corresponded to the situation we were experiencing with other types of distribution so that goods would be guaranteed to each housewife, whatever was available. Even if there was not a lot, at least what was available was guaranteed. There is some candy and popcorn and all those things that used to be sold here and are now going to be sold at the computer palace.

We decided that this center was going to close. You know that a lot of people stood in line. People stood in line and then sold things. You know all those things. This little parallel market shop was closed. Then the idea of what to do with the place came up. Some suggested to open an area market. One of those supermarkets for 5,000, 6,000, or 7,000 residents. [Words indistinct] left. Are you leaving?

[Speaker] [Words indistinct].

[Castro] Oh, fine. We considered this with the UJC. How did the idea come up, Robertico?

[Robaina] The day before leaving for China we proposed it.

[Castro] Oh, the day before you left for China. You made the proposal to use this for.... [changes thought] I liked it a lot. The only thing that had to be discussed was that people from the Domestic Trade Ministry were thinking about doing.... [changes thought] At that time they were working on a program of 156 vegetable stands. They are now 161 [words indistinct]. We were planning a distribution network and thought, what is this center going to do for a small number of customers? Then the decision was made to use this—since we could not build the other one—for the Central Computer Palace.

We have not given up on our old idea. We have not given up on our project.

[Speaker] [Words indistinct].

[Castro] Yes, yes, yes. Not on the place or all that. If this place is good, that one is going to be even better. That is, when we can build it. We will reserve the plans and everything. Listen, you do not know how wonderful it is that this was turned into the Central Computer Palace. This is good for all the residents of Centro Habana who were tired of seeing disputes, quarrels, and fights in the lines and some lumpen elements who hung around there. This cleans this area of our city. This Centro Habana Municipality is culturally, scientifically, and recreationally enriched. This municipality is made more decent with this center's presence.

This is one of the projects which has pleased us the most. Of course, the 161 produce stands are almost completed. The opening has coincided with the time in which more agricultural supplies are arriving in the city, at the time in which there are more tomatoes and bananas. More of everything is arriving. These are the first results of the food program efforts in Havana Province. Nobody is going to miss the little shop that used to exist in the center's market. Now, the four agricultural distribution centers are almost completed and they are practically not enough. There have been goods. The problem is to guarantee the goods' presence all the time—not all of them because there are some that cannot be produced at some times of the year. Everything that can be produced in each season will be guaranteed. Therefore, the center's inauguration has coincided with the time in which more agricultural supplies are arriving in the capital.

Of course, that is nothing. Speaking of the food program, a lot of plantain plants are being planted now. They take a year before they begin to produce plantains. That is going very well. The young people and the UJC cadres know it because they have participated in the camps. This situation will improve. The situation next year will be one of much more supplies than the ones we have now. It is symbolic. I was thinking about it.

Now that the Centro Habana market has been turned into a Youth Computer Club.... [changes thought] We already discussed this, this is called the Central Computer Palace. It is a name we have given it [applause]—Central Palace of Youth Computer Clubs. The Central Palace of Youth Computer Clubs. Of course, we do not have the other one; we have to wait to have the other one. In the meantime we have our dreams. This is not a palace. This is a palace. At least, as far as what we have seen, the things we have seen, the spirit and atmosphere we have seen, makes this center worthy of being called a palace. Youth Computer Club Palace?

[Robaina] Central Computer Palace.

[Castro] Central Computer Palace. So I believe it is an important advance. We are happy, we are pleased that you have all these resources. The most important thing is the will to continue working. We now have to see how all this operates and we will perfect it if it can be perfected. I am certain that this is a success starting now. This is going to be supported. I have seen wonderful things at the library and other places. I have seen fantastic rooms. I have seen wonderful people in charge of providing services. The multiple-task system is being implemented. There is a minimum number of staff members. This large building, which at another time would have a roaster of 250 workers, is operating with less than 70. This is also the application of very important criteria in the need to rectify the habit of filling the installations with workers and all that. Even in this area the palace is beginning its life well. I was saying that the important thing was the will of continuing with the movement. We have computer factories. I want you to know that the computers here were made here. Almost all of those machines were built here. We continue to study how much it costs us, how much a new one costs us, how much the components cost us. We have to observe the quality of these machines. We are interested in introducing homogeneity in computers because there are thousands of machines in the country and 51 different brands. Everyone bought one over here and over there when they had a few resources. We have a computer factory. We are estimating which resources we can use this year to build a number of them, for the Youth Computer Club program, among other things, and to begin standarizing the machines we have in the country. That machine [corrects himself] that factory has a very high capability.

Not only computers are being built here but also robots and high-technology medical equipment. Several research centers are working on those pieces of equipment. We are going to be very strong in that area. We are going to have all the necessary short-series plants. Sometimes we have to make 100 and not 10,000 Cardiosids. These types of installations will continue to develop. In the end, I think we will continue to have our computer factory.

The country has some 15,000 machines today. The day will come when we will have 50,000, 100,000, and who knows how many. The entire tourism program requires many machines so that there are appropriate controls for the efficient management and for the prevention of giving facilities to those who like to get hold of what they are not entitled to. The food program also needs a lot of computers. The scientific programs we are developing require computers.

Therefore, I truly consider this to be a happy day when we inaugurate our Central Computer Palace. You will be able to count on us among this movement's most enthusiast supporters. This is one more of the things that the UJC is doing but is one of the most important ones. I would say that future generations will always be grateful of this effort. You know that future generations will be better and better and they are showing it. They have shown it in the struggle, in combat, in the great tasks of the development of the revolution. They have shown it in the exemplary and impressive way in which they are facing these difficult years, in the way they face the tests of today, and their willingness to face the necessary tests. If something can be

said about our youths and our people it is that they do not fear anything or anyone. They do not tremble before anything or anyone.

Regardless of the crimes imperialists commit, or have committed recently in other areas, everything is different here. Ideas and concepts are different here. I am not going to expand on this subject. This is not the most appropriate time, but I can say that if there are people in the world and youth in the world who are prepared to face any test, they are these people and these youth. [applause]

This is why we want for them to prepare as much as they can, to go as far as they can go, to fly as high as the stars. This is what we want for our youth. This gives us great confidence in the time to come. This gives us great confidence in the future, in this youth which we know can really go very far. What we are seeing and doing today makes us, the adolescents of a mature age—what do you think about that?—[laughter] feel very happy.

Someone asked me to write something about my impressions in opening this Youth Computer Club.

[Speaker] Computer Palace.

[Castro] Is it not a Youth Computer Club? [laughter] One thing does not rule out the other. This is the capital of Youth Computer Clubs. I do not thing of the Youth Computer Clubs without this and this without the Youth Computer Clubs. Yes. I am going to write my impressions very briefly since I see a pen over there. Before that, I want to reaffirm once more our slogan. What? When we have people like you who go from Playa to school, from the school to here, and from here to Playa, and do not even have roller skates.... [changes thought] He [the speaker] has shoes for now. Let us see. [laughter] We hope that he can keep his shoes in good shape. He also takes care of his figure. You will not gain weight as some people I have seen around there. Keep yourself like that, which is the way to live over 100 years. Understand?

[Speaker] I stretch out lengthwise and not sideways.

[Castro] You are gaining weight; what happens is that you are growing a lot.

[Speaker] I have grown quite a bit since you saw me.

[Castro] Yes, since I saw you two years ago I think you have grown at least one foot.

This is why before you and having confidence in you we can repeat our slogan that says: Socialism or death, Fatherland or death! We will win! [crowd joins in the slogan] [applause]

FEU Leader Delivers 13 Mar Anniversary Address

FL1403021991

[Editorial Report] Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish at 2015 GMT on 13 March 1991 is observed carrying in progress a reenactment of the speech made over Radio Reloj by Jose Antonio Echeverria, president of the 1957 University Students' Federation (FEU), during the attack on the presidential palace and Radio Reloj on 13 March 1957.

The announcer reports that there are numerous civilian and military casualties and that new civilian contingents have arrived and are attacking the palace.

After a brief commercial, the announcer reports that an unidentified civilian group has attacked the presidential palace and that a clash has ensued with the palace guards. The reporter adds that Army, Navy, and police officers have taken over the Armed Forces command. Then the announcer reads a joint communique issued by the rebel officers.

The announcer later states that FEU President Jose Antonio Echeverria will deliver an address to the Cuban people. Echeverria says that Batista has been ousted.

As Echeverria's speech fades, an unidentified female voice announces Batista's fall and reports that other groups have come to the support of the revolution. She also urges all Cubans to do the same, to join the struggle and help the revolution.

The radio announcer reports that current FEU President Carmen Rosa Baez has just proceeded to read the speech that Jose Antonio Echeverria was unable to finish reading on 13 March 1957 because the owners of the radio station had interrupted broadcasts. The announcer reports that the current FEU president will now deliver an address to the Cuban people.

Carmen Rosa Baez states in her address that from the site where Jose Antonio Echeverria delivered his address on 13 March 1957, the FEU again addresses all Cubans.

She says that on this 13 March, Cuba is again filled with pride. She adds that this 13 March again finds Cuba in struggle, but not against the government because it is the people's government. She states that this time the people are rebelling against the enemies of the people and that this is possible because there have been many heroic acheivements similar to those of 13 March 1957.

Baez informs the Cuban people that the FEU is firmly supporting the nation. She thanks the heroic 1957 university generation, and announces that there will be a gathering at the university steps, and that later, there will be a march to the Museum of the Revolution.

Baez concludes her speech by calling on all people to join the march in honor of the freedom that was won by the martyrs of 13 March 1957.

* Installation of Telephone Lines Under Way

91P40177A

[Editorial Report] Havana GRANMA in Spanish of 26 February 1991 on page 2 reports that at a meeting of the Expansion Board of the Ministry of Communications it was announced that 43,200 telephone lines are being installed in Havana City. This project, along with last year's installation of 57,000 lines, is part of a plan that in the next three years will install 222,000 lines and 5,000 km

of cables. Minister of Communications Manuel Castillo Rabassa reiterated at the meeting his ministry's determination to continue blocking the anti-Cuban TV signal, and stated that all projects related to the transmission of the Panamerican Games will be completed. It was further reported at the meeting that in 1990, 82 km of overhead lines were installed in areas which fall under the Turquino Plan.

Inter-Caribbean Affairs

Jamaicans Cite Regional Needs, Urge Integration

FL1303202591 Bridgetown CANA in English 1851 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, March 13, CANA—Jamaicans appearing before the West Indian Commission Tuesday blasted Caribbean Community (Caricom) [Caribbean Common Market] government leaders for their "lack of commitment" to regional integration.

At a stormy session hosted by the commission, set up to review Caricom and chart its future course, lecturers and students from the Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies (UWI) lambasted regional governments for paying only "lip service" to regional integration. Several speakers cited little progress over the years in implementing resolutions and decisions taken by the heads of government at their yearly summits. Several factors were identified, including a lack of political will and jealousy among regional leaders and politicians, as being responsible for stifling the integration movement.

At another public session attended by a wide cross-section of Jamaicans, speakers cited a need for Caricom citizens to have greater freedom of movement within 13-nation economic community. They complained that while Caricom citizens were required to produce passports for entry into Caricom states, visitors from North America only had to show a driver's license.

The complaint was also made that Rastafarians, among others, were subjected to intensive questioning by immigration officers in some Caricom territories.

One speaker, commenting on the growing incidence of crime throughout the region, suggested that crimes committed in one territory should be prosecuted in another. There was also a suggestion that systems be introduced allowing nationals of one Caribbean island to make mortgage payments for property he might own in another. There were also calls for a regional health scheme.

One young man said many "ordinary" people were unaware of the benefits of integration. Citing the example of the Renaissance Movement, he said it was time that Caribbean intellectuals, singers, artists form the vanguard of the integration movement by promoting integration in their works.

"If this starts, then there is no way any government can say no (to integration). We have to start to think Caribbean or we will be left behind," he declared.

Other issues raised at the public session included the need for technology development, greater emphasis on agriculture, education, and family life.

The West Indian Commission is chaired by former Commonwealth Secretary General Sir Shridath Ramphal. It will report the findings of its consultations with the region's people to Caricom heads of government.

Antigua and Barbuda

Cabinet Meeting Cancelled; Possible Reshuffle

FL1303173591 Bridgetown CANA in English 1706 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] St. John's, Antigua, March 13, CANA—Antigua and Barbuda's weekly cabinet meeting was cancelled Wednesday, as embattled government parliamentarians prepared for a debate on the national budget. Cabinet Secretary Lounel Stevens said the regular meeting was dropped to allow cabinet members extra time to prepare for the debate Thursday.

In Parliament, elderly Prime Minister Vere Bird Sr. faces a government side divided over his budget presentation last week. Seven government parliamentarians had called on Bird to step down, saying he plunged the government into a constitutional crisis by reading the highlights of the budget and not the full text, as is required.

Government officials told CANA Bird had rejected the resignation demand made by the rebel group that includes his son, Lester, and was preparing to announce a cabinet reshuffle Friday.

One official said the prime minister's plan was to get the budget passed Thursday, even if it meant working into the night. Bird Sr. is said to have the support of nine parliamentarians, with the faction headed by his son now comprising five. The officials said support for Lester Bird had dwindled in the last few days.

The opposition holds two of the 17 parliamentary seats.

Dominican Republic

Government Examines Haitian Workers' Situation

FL1303205591 Santo Domingo Radio-Television Dominicana Radio Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Labor Secretary Dr. Rafael Albuquerque has asserted that the government is extremely interested in normalizing the Haitian workers' situation in the country. Dr. Albuquerque advised that the Labor Department is currently working on the decree that establishes the need to legalize hiring practices for Haitian workers. He reported that 18 labor inspectors are supervising the Haitian workers' situation at various State Sugar Council mills.

Dr. Albuquerque's remarks came after a meeting at the National Palace with presidential secretary Rafael Bello Andino, briefing him on the essential needs of the Labor

Department. Dr. Albuquerque also said that the Dominican Republic's Labor Code establishes that workers are free to join unions in the country regardless of their nationality.

Jamaica

Manley Dismisses Opposition Calls for Resignation

FL1303124091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1137 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, March 13, CANA—Jamaica Prime Minister Michael Manley has dismissed as "nonsense" opposition calls for the government to resign in the wake of a furniture scandal. Manley said that the controversial issue of furnishing of state-owned or state-rented homes had nothing to do with fraud but with the accounting systems.

"If that is a basis for the government to resign then I don't think any government in the history of this country should have lasted more than six months," said Manley.

Several government ministers have been accused of overspending public funds in furnishing their homes. The spending limit is J [Jamaican] 150,000 dollars (one J dollar equals 12.5 U.S. cents) for each person. Some have even bought satellite dishes, television sets, and other electronic equipment with public funds. The prime minister himself has repaid J 52,000 dollars, part of the cost of constructing a security wall at his private residence. The wall was built with public funds.

According to Manley, the volume of negative publicity given to the furniture scandal has caused the issue to be blown "completely out of proportion." He pointed out that when he asked some of the ministers to repay the state for their television sets, there was no suggestion or hint of fraud by the parliamentarians. But he felt that the state should not be asked to pay for sets in the government-owned houses. "The state does not need the television sets," he declared.

He noted that after he asked the members to pay for the sets the public immediately got the impression that they were involved in fraudulent behaviour. He said there had just been an error of judgement.

"People are not recognising that there is not one item in any of the government houses that belongs to the person. It is by tradition and (on) cabinet and parliamentary authority over the years that the places were furnished and the things that are in those houses are owned by the state," Manley emphasised.

The prime minister said that the auditor general's department needed to be strengthened to deal more effectively with weaknesses in the system which had been showing up repeatedly for several years. In addition, he said the government had taken steps to tighten up the system so that there could be a greater level of accountability.

Opposition Labor MP's Walk Out of Parliament

FL1303155091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1510 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, March 13, CANA—Opposition Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) MP's [member of Parliament] walked out of the House of Representatives Tuesday to protest what they said was government disrespect for the opposition. The walk-out occurred after opposition finance spokesman Bruce Golding complained about the late arrival of information he had requested from the Ministry of Finance.

The former construction minister said he had needed the information to prepare his presentation for a debate which ended Tuesday on the first supplementary estimates. Expressing "deep disgust" at the government's actions, Golding told the house that he had only minutes before been informed by his office that the information had arrived.

Opposition leader Edward Seaga, speaking just before the walk-out, said the lack of cooperation by the government would not be condoned or tolerated by the opposition. The opposition demanded a certain amount of respect regardless of adversarial politics, he said.

"We will not allow ourselves to be disrespected," declared Seaga as he showed an unopened envelope which he said contained the information requested and which was delivered to him as he was leaving his office for Parliament.

Earlier, Golding, speaking for the first time on the furniture scandal which has embarrassed the Manley government, gave figures on the amount of money spent on furnishings by the JLP when they were in government. He said that during the JLP's nine years in office, they had spent just under 240,000 dollars on furnishings. This, he said, compared with over J [Jamaican] 5 million dollars spent by the People's National Party (PNP) government since April 1989, two months after it came to power.

Phillips Appointed Commissioner to Venezuela

FL1303130091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1149 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, March 13, CANA—Jamaica's prime minister, Michael Manley, has appointed Senator Peter Phillips to help ensure that agreements between the island and Venezuela are pursued. The agreements arrived at during Manley's recent official visit to Venezuela relate to economic co-operation, energy, tourism, trade, and investment opportunities.

The initiatives in which Dr. Phillips, who is state minister in the office of the prime minister, will be involved include negotiations for a one way free trade access into Venezuela for a wide range of Jamaican and Caribbean products. He will also promote and explore joint venture investment between the private sectors of Jamaica and Venezuela. A group of Venezuelan businessmen will be visiting Jamaica shortly for discussions with the government and the private sector.

Dr. Phillips will also pursue the initiatives offered by the Government of Venezuela to use the debt owed by Jamaica for debt swap arrangements as another source of investment capital for these joint ventures. He is also to liase with the Caribbean Community Secretariat in negotiations under the United States' Enterprise for the Americas Initiative (relating to debt-reduction and investment) and the Rio Group of Latin American nations.

Given his new assignment, Dr. Phillips will relinquish his recent appointment as chairman of the National Investment Bank of Jamaica from March 18.

Finance Minister Announces Decline in IMF Debt

FL1203182091 Bridgetown CANA in English 1804 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Kingston, Jamaica, March 12, CANA—Jamaica's debt to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) declined from U.S. 688 million dollars in 1985/86 to U.S. 360 million dollars in 1989/90, Finance Minister P.J. Patterson said. Speaking at an insurance awards ceremony over the weekend, Patterson, the island's deputy prime minister, also said debt service as a percentage of exports had declined from 50.6 percent in 1985/86 to 27.4 percent in 1990/91.

Giving an update on the economy, Patterson said tourist expenditure had increased from U.S. 397 million in 1985/86 to U.S. 583 million in 1989/90. Tourism was projected to earn U.S. 670 million in 1990/91 depending on the effects of the just concluded Gulf war and the U.S. recession, he said.

Referring to the new Banking Act tabled in Parliament, Patterson said the aim was to provide a proper legal environment in keeping with the government's committment to liberalising the Jamaican economy. The act, which will replace one enacted in 1961, proposes strict provisions regarding transactions between commercial banks and individuals having connections with the managers, directors, and large shareholders of the bank. Other provisions include a hike in the amount of subscribed capital and paid up capital. Under the new law, commercial banks must have subscribed capital of not less than 40 million Jamaican dollars and paid up capital of not less than 30 million Jamaican dollars.

St. Lucia

CET Begins 1 May; Committee To Examine Impact

FL1403003091 Bridgetown CANA in English 2042 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Castries, St. Lucia, March 13, CANA—St. Lucia announced Wednesday that it would implement the Caribbean Community (Caricom) [Caribbena Common Market] Common External Tariff (CET) on May 1. Trade Minister George Mallet said while the island had originally suggested April 1 as the implementation date, it had also indicated that the CET would come into force by proclamation.

"As far back as December last year, St. Lucia had the necessary legislation in train for the CET from January 1, but we had no guarantee other countries would do likewise," he said. "When we passed the legislation, we had also said it would come into force by proclamation," he added.

Under the CET, Caricom countries will adopt a unified tax structure on third country imports, the main aim being to protect fledgling regional industries. The tariff was originally scheduled to be implemented on January 1 by all member states, but the date was missed.

Mallet also announced that a committee had been established to review the existing consumption tax here. Private sector officials had complained that the cost of living would rise as a result of the CET. Mallet said the committee would determine whether the new legislation would be a burden to consumers.

* Objections to Hydroelectric Project Noted

* Project Impact Discussed

91CA0073A Mexico City LA JORNADA in Spanish 18 Feb 91 pp 1, 20

[Ivan Restrepo commentary]

[Text] Last May the then social-development manager of the Federal Electricity Commission (CFE) sought to bring together a group of specialists to gauge the environmental, social, and economic impact of building the San Juan Tetelcingo Reservoir on the upper Balsas River in Guerrero. The official expressed the commission's desire to undertake the project with social justice and minimal damage to the area's natural resources. Four investigators with proven experience in environmental and rural-development matters visited the area to ascertain the details of the project.

They first visited the El Caracol hydroelectric plant, which was completed in 1986 and can generate 600 megawatts. Some 5,500 people who lived in 16 pueblos and owned 4,000 hectares of agricultural land had to be relocated to build it. The commission gathered them together in six towns (858 houses in all), with seven primary schools, two secondary schools, health-care centers, civic plazas, and people's houses. We should note that every house had a parking place even though there was no road into the towns and the campesinos were poor. But the impressive hydroelectric plant has one tiny problem: it is becoming clogged owing to the soil erosion in the Upper Balsas basin. If something urgent is not done, the experts say, El Caracol will have just 20 more years of useful life. And that "something" is another hydroelectric power plant.

The group of CFE experts and technicians then visited the proposed building site: San Juan Tetelcingo and the nearby area. This project is larger than the previous one. This fourth hydroelectric plant on the Balsas (the others are El Caracol, Infiernillo, and La Villita) would flood 14,000 communal hectares comprising 16 pueblos that are home, according to the CFE, to 16,000 Nahua Indians, who are well known in Mexico and throughout the world for their beautiful paintings on amate paper. These communities would be covered by the reservoir, as would 7 kilometers of the Mexico City-Acapulco federal highway. Estimates are that a bit more than 10 percent of the hectares that will be flooded are essential to the community because they constitute its only farmland. Beyond the fertile river plain there are only arid, treeless hills.

The new project would generate 609 megawatts, a small fraction of the thousands that the commission estimates as the country's future needs, and would, during its 84-year useful life, retain the 25 million cubic meters of sediment that the basin delivers each year to the chosen construction site. There are those who wonder whether it will not meet the same fate as El Caracol. Thus, the possibility of building a fifth plant, P.H. Hostula, a few kilometers upriver, is already being looked into.

In the case of San Juan Tetelcingo, however, we must consider aspects other than generating energy and preventing sedimentation in an existing plant. It so happens that the highway to Acapulco will also affect the local population by diverting traffic from its current route through Xalitla and Tetelcingo. The highway would have a bridge crossing the reservoir. This spot would thus become strategic for the region's economic future, but its age-old inhabitants would be sent to live far away from there, on the banks of the reservoir.

The CFE is negotiating a $500 million foreign loan to build the new hydroelectric plant. If it gets it, it will have to comply with several environmental, financial, and social requirements set by international development banks for certain projects. For example, whenever possible, it must avoid or keep to a minimum forced relocations by looking into alternative solutions for development aims, and it must encourage the people who are affected to play a real role in planning the relocations. Regrettably, these two basic rules have been ignored so far in the case that concerns us, as have several less expensive alternatives that are less damaging to society and the environment.

In this regard, the government could look into the feasibility of building small dams and other irrigation projects, which would bring ample benefits to the locals and to Guerrero farming. Much of the resulting sediment could be used as fertilizer for the fields, and an effective reforestation policy would halt much of the current erosion. Small hydroelectric power plants could also generate energy for regional use. None of these options, which would cost much less than the large-scale project, have been evaluated.

The technocratic manner in which the project is being handled is also worrisome. In spite of a very high profile after several years in the region, the CFE has never told the locals or their authorities about the plans that are being drafted in the Federal District to remove them from their ancestral lands. They have been unwilling or unable to tell 30,000 Indians that their sacred lands, their culture, and their homes are less important than generating 609 megawatts.

The group of specialists who visited the proposed site of the new hydroelectric plant told the commission that they would not take part in any study unless the inhabitants of the region were informed immediately and in full about it and unless they were actively involved in everything having to do with a project that will have an enormous effect on them. After several friendly meetings with the social-development manager of the CFE, it was impossible to keep this minimal promise, and everything remained the same. Overnight, this official was named director of Inmecafe [Mexican Coffee Institute].

The residents of the region are now increasingly claiming their right to find out about the project and to be involved in making decisions that will radically alter their lives and their surroundings. The commission is not facing up to things. Let us hope that San Juan Tetelcingo will not in a few years represent another injustice committed against

man and nature by undertaking major projects. The examples abound: the Miguel Aleman reservoir in Veracruz, the La Angostura hydroelectric plant in Chiapas, and the Cerro de Oro reservoir in Oaxaca and Veracruz, to cite the saddest ones.

* Open Letter to President

91CA0073B Mexico City LA JORNADA in Spanish 18 Feb 91 p 9

[Text of Open Letter to President Carlos Salinas de Gortari: "Nahua Pueblos and the Group of 100: No to the Construction of the San Juan Tetelcingo Reservoir"]

[Text] Mr. President:

The Nahua communities of the Upper Balsas, Guerrero, represented by their legitimate authorities, the Council of Upper Balsas Nahua Pueblos (CPNAB), in addition to the Support Committee for the council, and the Group of 100, are extremely concerned about the threat that construction of the "San Juan Tetelcingo" reservoir by the Federal Electricity Commission represents. This reservoir would cause serious and irreparable environmental, cultural, and social disruption comparable to what is being suffered today by the inhabitants of Balsas Nuevo, a community made up of the abandoned pueblos of Campo Arroz, Tecomapa, Balsas Norte and Balsas Sur, La Zonteta, Ahuatlan, and others. These pueblos were cleared out in the wake of the construction of "El Caracol." As in all such relocation experiences in Mexico, the CFE promised to improve their living conditions but did not deliver. It gave the "beneficiaries" inadequate housing and contaminated water; it "improved" their agricultural production by damaging their lands with sodium nitrates without providing them sufficient drinking water. Mud killed off fauna and even some people. Many elderly individuals died of homesickness, and others suffered mental disturbances when they were uprooted from their places of origin. As if this were not enough, the CFE is now perpetrating another crime against the Huichola communities by building the Aguamilpa dam. The San Juan Tetelcingo reservoir will have similarly devastating effects by directly impacting more than 20 Nahua pueblos and their lands; entire fields will be flooded, as well as archaeological zones like Teopantecuanitlan, which has not yet been completely explored, zones that are part of Mexico's and mankind's patrimony. The reservoir will cause the disintegration of the traditional methods of handicrafts production and commerce, which are an inalienable part of the pueblos.

These communities, with their handicrafts, have survived the blows dealt by the conquest, the colonial period, and modern Mexico. The amate paper paintings, which are famous both here and abroad, are done in this region; pre-Hispanic style pottery, masks, and all sorts of wood carvings, as well as handmade rocking chairs, are produced here. Sending these communities off into regions that are alien to their culture will deprive them of the inputs they need to produce their handicrafts, thus taking away their livelihood.

The CFE and the state government argue, on the one hand, that the reservoir is only under study, but on the other hand they are announcing that construction will begin soon. We are convinced that the project is moving forward surreptitiously so that it can be made public when it is already an accomplished fact.

For these reasons, the pueblos and members of the undersigned groups ask you:

(1) To suspend immediately all work having to do with the construction of the "San Juan Tetelcingo" reservoir and to cancel this project, which is destructive of the environment and an ethnic group. The peoples of the region possess the inalienable right to have their social and cultural integrity respected as citizens with equal rights vis-a-vis the authorities who decide on public works.

(2) To inform the communities and national public opinion honestly about the true intentions of the CFE in the region, so as to halt the wave of disinformation and intimidation by officials of the CFE and the state government.

(3) To respect the civil and cultural rights of indigenous groups, as enshrined in national laws regarding genocide and the law of responsibilities of civil servants, and with regard to international agreements that our country has signed, such as Agreement 169 of the International Labor Organization, which Mexico signed in Geneva and which provides that indigenous peoples have a right to self-determination in their territories, as well as other patrimonial rights. Construction of the reservoir would violate the rights of the communities. If this project is undertaken with money from Spain, as is rumored, it would be like resuming the genocide that began almost 500 years ago, reaffirming the colonial greed of which the Indians are victims and from which we have not yet freed ourselves. What a shocking way to commemorate the 500th anniversary, by reopening the historic wounds that the Spanish conquest left among the cultures of the Americas.

Xalitla, Maexela, Ahuelican, Ahuehuepan, Ameyaltepec, Tlamamacan, San Juan Tetelcingo, San Marcos Oacatzingo, San Agustin Oapan, Analco, San Miguel Tecuiciapan, Tula del Rio, Oztotipan, San Francisco Ozomatlan, Ahuetlixpa, Totoltzintla, Tlacozotitlan, Tlayahualco, Mezquitepec, Tlapehualapa, Tinajas, and other pueblos along the ranks of the Balsas River.

On behalf of the CPNAB:

Sixto Cabanas, Crispin Vargas, Agustin Tolentino, Maurillo Santos, Tito Rutilo.

On behalf of the CPNAB Support Committee:

Jose Antonio Flores, Alfredo Ramirez, Marcelino Diaz, Juan P. Ramirez, Yolanda Lastra, Alfredo Lopez Austin, Leopoldo Valinas, Andres Medina, Juan J. Rendon, Marta Garcia, Alejandra Leal, Jorge Claro, Carlos de Jesus, Pedro de Jesus, Eustaquio Celestino, Victor Franco, Sergio G. Sanchez, Lourdes Alvaerz, Manuel Rios, Hidelberto Martinez, Constantino Medina, Ulises Martinez, Silverio D.

Sanchez, Cecilia Rossell, Clara Elena Suarez, Jesus Ruvalcaba, Felix Salgado, Minerva Ramirez, Apolinar Moreno, Sergio Moreno, Barbara Cifuentes, Carmen Herrera, Guadalupe Martinez Don Juan, Luz Maria Mohar, Ernesto Diaz C., Maria Luisa Garfias, Sergio Fajardo, Alfonso Cortes, Luis del Arco, Hipolito A. Hernandez, Salvador Rodriguez, Faustino Palacios, Inocencio Ines M., Sabino Estrada, Juventino Cota, Hopolito Morales, Joaquin Galarza.

Signing for the Group of 100:

Octavio Paz, Rufino Tamayo, Antonio Alatorre, Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Colette Alvarez Urbajtel, Nedda C. de Anhalt, Homero Aridjis, Alejandro Aura, Rene Aviles Fabila, Juan Banuelos, Huberto Batiz, Hilda Bautista, Feliciano Bejar, Arnold Belkin, Alberto Blanco, Carmen Boullosa, Federico Campbell, Emilio Carballido, Fernando Cesarman, Arnoldo Coen, Raul Cossio, Elsa Cross, Rogelio Cuellar, Jose Luis Cuevas, Shirley Chernitsky, Ali Chumacero, Joaquin Diez Canedo, Felipe Ehrenberg, Salvador Elizondo, Helen Escobedo, Manuel Felguerez, Betty Ferber, Guillermo Fernandez, Margit Frenk, Carlos Fuentes, Hector Garcia, Juan Garcia Ponce, Ricardo Garibay, Gunter Gerzso, Margo Glantz, Arturo Gonzalez Casio, Ulalume Gonzalez de Leon, Roger von Gunten, Juan Jose Gurrola, Marta Hellion, Jan Hendrix, Raul Herrera, David Huerta, Barbara Jacobs, Enrique Krauze, Ethel Krauze, Salomon Laiter, Mario Lavista, Paulina Lavista, Vicente Lenero, Arturo Lomeli, Elva Macias, Gabriel Macotela, Jorge Alberto Manrique, Ludwig Margules, Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, Arturo Mecalco, Ofelia Medina, Victor Manuel Mendiola, Maria Luisa Mendoza, Sergio Mondragon, Miriam Moscona, Carlos Monsivais, Augusto Monterroso, Alvaro Mutis, Francisco Nunez, Jose Emilio Pacheco, Tomas Parra, Ana Pellicer, Pilar Pellicer, Sergio Pitol, Elena Poniatowski, Ivan Restrepo, Federico Reyes Heroles, Mariano Rivera Velazquez, Vicente Rojo, Alejandro Rossi, Alberto Ruy Sanchez, Marti Soler, Olga Tamayo, Isabel Turrent, Cordelia Urueta, Edmundo Valades, Mario del Valle, Luis Roberto Vera, Margarita Villasenor, Vlady, Veronica Volkow, Ramon Xirau, Eraclio Zepeda.

In charge of publication: Jose A. Flores Farfan and Juan Petronilo Ramirez

Costa Rica

State Reorganization Minister Dismissed

PA1103232291 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1630 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Johnny Meono Segura, minister of state reorganization, has been dismissed [words indistinct], it was announced this morning. His dismissal is due, among other things, to ideological discrepancies over the letter of intent [with the IMF], and the way in which the dismissals of the public officials are being handled.

As for his future, Meono said he has yet to decided if he stays as adviser to the president of the Republic or as an ambassador to Italy. [sentence as heard] [passage omitted]

* 1991 Poll Reaffirms Calderon's Popularity

91CA0074A San Jose LA NACION in Spanish 3 Feb 91 p 5

[Article by Carlos Cortes]

[Text] About 36 percent of Costa Ricans consider that the performance in office of President Rafael Angel Calderon has been good or very good, compared to 30 percent who consider his performance has been bad or very bad, while 30 percent consider that he has done an average job.

These results emerge from a national opinion poll which Unimer S. A., a research firm, carried out between 5 and 19 January at the request of LA NACION. The poll sought to learn the views of a sample of the Costa Rican people on the performance of government and public personalities, on popular political preferences, and on contemporary questions.

This is the first poll which Unimer has carried out for this newspaper. For the previous 11 years LA NACION had published public opinion polls prepared by Interdisciplinary Consultants on Development (CID).

The poll was carried out, using a sample of 1,202 persons, including men and women throughout the country. It has a margin of error of 2.83 percent or less.

Despite the fact that the poll was conducted recently, since the Christmas and New Year's holidays, the majority of Costa Ricans (36 percent) inclined to favor Calderon is significant. During the last quarter of 1990 there were major increases in the cost of living. Furthermore, at the end of 1990 the first layoffs of government employees were announced, as part of the plan of labor mobility.

Although the UNIMER poll involves another methodology, and the data therefore cannot be compared precisely, the last public opinion poll carried out by the CID for LA NACION in August 1990 reported that 34 percent of the people supported the actions of the president.

Party Affiliation

The political party which individual respondents to the poll supported in the last elections or his or her party affiliation was decisive in forming opinions on the performance of the government. While 66.5 percent of those polled who supported the Social Christian Unity Party (PUSC) considered the Calderon administration good or very good, only 19 percent of the supporters of the National Liberation Party (PLN) who were consulted had the same opinion of the Calderon government.

Almost half of the social democrats polled considered that President Calderon's performance in office was bad or very bad.

This view also had an influence on the fact that 45 percent of all persons polled stated that the administration of President Rafael Angel Calderon is worse than that of Dr. Oscar Arias Sanchez, the previous president, while about 30 percent considered that they were about the same. Only 18 percent said that the social Christian administration was better.

Dr. Haydee Mendiola Teran, who was responsible for the technical supervision of the poll, said: "This is a normal development. Political party affiliation is decisive in forming opinions on many aspects of the situation."

Despite the relative support which more than one-third of the Costa Rican people have for the president's performance, according to the poll, there is no clear perception of the principal actions taken by the government.

To the question "What do you think are the two best actions taken by the government of President Calderon?" answers were widely scattered. The largest single group (43.5 percent) was made up of a variety of opinions, each of which was only supported by one percent, or even less, of the sample.

The only two answers which had the support of more than 10 percent of those polled mentioned food certificates (11 percent) and the reduction in public spending (10 percent). About six percent of those polled considered that the best government policy was related to both food and housing certificates, while about the same number of people supported the latter only.

Only seven percent of those polled mentioned labor mobility as one of the best achievements of the government. This result related to the fact that about 59 percent of those polled were opposed to the dismissal of civil servants, while 33 percent had a favorable opinion of this action.

Nevertheless, this circumstance is in dramatic contrast to the fact that more than half of the sample (51 percent) considered that the reduction in public spending was necessary. About 36 percent of those polled held the contrary view.

Other government policies which were not clearly understood included: national security and road safety (both with the support of four percent of those polled), energy savings and foreign debt (each with the support of three percent of the sample), and tax collection (two percent of the sample).

Social and Economic Policy

The negative view of the policy of labor mobility agrees with the view of 55 percent of the sample that the Calderon government has no clear social policy. The opposing view, that the government has a clear social policy, had the support of 36 percent of those polled.

In answer to the question: "Who benefits most from the economic policy of the present government?" about 53 percent of those polled said that it was the upper classes. About 25 percent said that everyone benefits equally, nine percent felt that the poorer classes profited most, and 8.5 percent felt that "no one" benefited.

In this connection, as well as with regard to the dismissal of government employees, political affiliation was the decisive basis for expressing views in favor of or in opposition to such action. This circumstance indicates that a majority of PLN supporters among those polled reject the policies of the present administration.

This was also the decisive consideration underlying the view that the government has no clear economic policy, a view held by 55 percent of those polled, compared to 31 percent of those who hold an opposing view.

Costa Ricans polled also expressed support for the state subsidizing the cost of public services (58 percent compared to 32 percent who are opposed). A majority (70 percent) of those polled supported the way in which negotiations on repayment of the foreign debt were handled, while the policy of promoting exports was supported by 74 percent of those polled. However, 48 percent of those polled consider that there is no definite foreign policy.

Good Image of the Arias Administration

About 61 percent of those polled considered that the administration of Dr. Oscar Arias Sanchez did a better job of handling relations with international financial organizations.

The PLN administration under Doctor Arias, which controlled the government between 1986 and 1990, was in first place (with 51 percent of those polled) in response to the question of ranking in decreasing order the names of former presidents in terms of how positively those who were being polled rated the performance of their administrations.

President Arias Sanchez was followed by Jose Joaquin Trejos Fernandez (25 percent), Daniel Oduber (10 percent), Luis Alberto Monge (seven percent), and Mario Echandi and Rodrigo Carazo (three percent each).

Popularity of Calderon Administration in 1990

Performance of President (Figures in Percent of Sample)

	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor	No Opinion	Total
Calderon	9.8	46.0	27.7	9.6	4.5	2.4	100
Castillo	1.4	16.5	30.8	33.0	16.5	1.8	100
Others	0.0	42.9	14.3	42.9	0.0	0.0	100
No Opinion	0.5	27.0	34.4	22.2	9.5	6.3	100
Don't Know	0.0	33.3	35.4	12.5	4.2	14.6	100

Source: Poll of Domestic Opinion by UNIMER, January 1991

El Salvador

FMLN on Elections, OAS Role in Negotiation

PA1303171491 (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Communique issued by the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) General Command, in El Salvador on 11 March—read by unidentified announcer]

[Text] 1. The opposition won the most seats in the National Assembly, and this represents an important victory that must be defended so that in our country there will be an end to the disrespect of the people's will by setting the precedent that the results are unquestionable, unchangable, and acceptable over any consideration or particular interest.

2. Arena [Nationalist Republican Alliance] is perpetrating a fraud to fix the election results—without having to grossly alter the figures—in order to hold a majority in the assembly and avoid being forced to accept, within the negotiation, the changes leading to a true democracy and achieving a cease-fire. This is, therefore, a major fraud because the future of peace in the country is at stake.

3. Any role that the OAS could play in the negotiation is in doubt because this international organization has issued an opinion without waiting for the results of the elections. This could cover up Arena's fraud to impose a majority at the Legislative Assembly.

We congratulate the opposition parties for their victory and voice our support for their struggle to preserve it. We also urge all social forces and the international community to remain on guard to ensure that the results of these election are respected.

[Signed] FMLN General Command
El Salvador, 11 March 1991

Reportage on Election Fraud Charge Controversy

Opposition Protests

PA1403021891 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2339 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Excerpts] San Salvador, 13 Mar (NOTIMEX)—The opposition political and labor forces of El Salvador warned here

today that they will defend the votes garnered by the leftists in the legislative elections and condemned the attempted fraud during the elections.

Hundreds of supporters and leaders of the leftist Democratic Convergence (CD) staged a protest march on the streets of this capital, which ended with a political rally in front of the building where the official vote count took place.

The CD militants, who were accompanied by members of other opposition political and labor forces, were denied entry to the building by a riot squad.

The slogan "people's power" rang out during the rally, where Social Democratic leader Ruben Zamora declared that "the opposition will defend the progress achieved by the people in the recent elections" for mayors and deputies.

The protests began in the wake of charges voiced yesterday by the opposition that the election authorities had implemented "a sophisticated fraud system" to prevent the CD from becoming the country's third political force.

Zamora accused the ruling Nationalist Republican Alliance (Arena) of wanting to replace the CD with the National Conciliation Party (PCN), which according to Zamora "is a defunct party that is being used."

We regret that the PCN is engaging in such dirty deals, but we are not going to allow it," Zamora said. He added that "they are trying to do in the vote count what they were unable to do on election day." [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) released a communique here this morning which said: "The government is seeking a majority in the assembly, which is why it resorted to fraud to mock the decision of the Salvadoran people." [passage omitted]

Pacas Denies Fraud, Document

PA1403005691 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2046 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] San Salvador, 13 Mar (NOTIMEX)—Salvadoran Foreign Minister Manuel Pacas said here today that the fraud reports from the opposition are an attempt at "darkening" the democratic process.

During a news conference, the minister denied all possibility that in the 10 March legislative and municipal elections the Nationalist Republican Alliance [Arena] orchestrated a fraud, as several political parties and forces have reported.

He pointed out that the presence of international observers at the elections and the political parties' participation in the Central Electoral Council "preclude all possibility of fraud" and, for that reason, he is rejecting all charges in this regard.

The leftist Democratic Convergence [CD], the Christian Democratic Party [PDC], and the Nationalist Democratic Unity [UDN] have reported "serious irregularities" during the elections, which they say favor Arena.

"Any groundless accusations are an attempt at darkening the process that the Salvadoran people have been sponsoring with zeal and great sacrifice," Pacas said.

The minister declined to confirm or deny the existence of an alleged joint proposal that Arena, the PDC, and the CD would present to the government and the guerrillas.

"I know nothing of such a proposal. If I did, I would not comment on it," he said.

The document, leaked to the media yesterday, is signed by Arena Secretary General Armando Calderon Sol, PDC Secretary General Fidel Chavez Mena, and CD Secretary General Ruben Zamora, although both Chavez and Zamora denied the report yesterday.

Opposition To Form Single Bloc in Assembly

PA1403030491 San Salvador EL MUNDO in Spanish 12 Mar 91 p 28

[Article by Rene Hurtado]

[Text] Leaders of the PDC [Christian Democratic Party], Democratic Convergence [CD], and the UDN [National Democratic Union] said a few hours ago that the opposition will form "a single bloc" of deputies at the Legislative Assembly. The exact number of deputies they will have is still unknown. In the mean time, they wait for the official results from the Central Electoral Council [CCE].

According to the PDC, there is a tie between the opposition parties and the government party, Arena [Nationalist Republican Alliance]. This could make the negotiations more dynamic in the search for peace, starting with a cease-fire.

The CD, which is made up of the MNR [National Revolutionary Movement], MPSC [Social Christian Peoples Movement], and PSD [Social Democratic Party], said that "these results in the elections are a victory and we are satisfied by the coalitions' results. The next presidential elections will be the pinnacle of our political path because we will be the Salvadoran people's alternative."

Meanwhile, Arena says they have won the majority of the seats at the assembly. According to the first official data provided by the CCE, after counting 10 percent of the votes, Arena received 47 percent of the votes for the assembly and the majority of the municipalities.

The UDN, which participated in elections for the first time, after getting organized for the past two years, won one or two seats for deputies. Its leadership came up with the idea of forming a single bloc at the Legislative Assembly.

The PCN [National Conciliation Party] occupied the fifth place after the UDN in San Salvador, but apparently the party still holds third place nationwide because it won between four and six seats at the assembly and, although there is still no official confirmation, they are calling themselves "the balance of the legislative power."

Regarding the MAC [Authentic Christian Movement] and Democratic Action Party, these two parties might disappear because they might not get the minimum percentage of votes required by law. The MAC was formed by Julio Adolfo Rey Prendes and Guillermo Antonio Guevara Lacayo after they left the PDC.

PCN Claims To Hold Third Place in Assembly

PA1403043891 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 13 Mar 91 pp 2, 31

[Text] The National Conciliation Party [PCN] claims to be the third force in the new Legislative Assembly, rejecting the idea that the leftist Democratic Convergence [CD] has reached that position.

Ciro Cruz Zepeda, secretary general of the PCN, said that the CD, a coalition of three leftist parties, "has only speculated with Sunday's election results to confuse the people."

According to Cruz Zepeda, the PCN has become the balance between the government party and the opposition blocs.

"We have the satisfaction of having gone alone to the elections, without commitments to anyone," he said.

Party member Julio Moreno said that, as of yesterday, the PCN had nine deputies and was contesting for another in Chalatenango Department.

He added that, even if yesterday the CD had 13 percent of the total counted votes while the PCN only had 10 percent, some of the PCN's ballot boxes had still not been counted and those could make the difference. On the other hand, the CD had counted almost all of its ballot boxes.

Election Set for Some Municipalities 17 Mar

PA1303155091 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1200 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] The Salvadoran Central Electoral Council [CCE] has begun the definitive vote count in each department of the 10 March elections. The final results will not be known until next week, however, because there are elections pending in several municipalities.

CCE President Jaime Romero Ventura said that by agreement with the political parties, elections for mayors and municipal officials will be held on 17 March in the central La Libertad Department, because the flag of the left-wing alliance Democratic Convergence [CD] did not appear on the ballots printed for the 10 March elections.

On 17 March elections will also be held for mayors and deputies in California municipality in Usulutan Department and Sensembra municipality in Morazan Department; both of which are in the east of the country. Elections were not held in these municipalities due to the presence of guerrillas who did not allow the placing of ballot boxes.

Romero explained that the final vote count has begun in Ahuachapan and San Vicente Departments. He added that the vote count of the remaining 10 departments will be done during the week.

Preliminary official results, based on over 10 percent of the returns, confirmed a victory for the ruling right-wing Nationalist Republican Alliance [Arena] with 47 percent of the vote.

According to these returns, the Christian Democratic Party holds second place with 31 percent, the National Conciliation Party garnered 11.28 percent, and the CD 8.2 percent of the vote.

FMLN Sources Report Rebel Offensive 'Imminent'

PA1403005891 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2253 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Excerpts] San Jose, 13 Mar (NOTIMEX)—The Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) of El Salvador is preparing a strong offensive in its country, sources close to that insurgent group announced here today.

One of the sources, who did not want to be identified, said that the rebel forces will soon launch an important military "recovery" action.

The FMLN will recover several towns that were occupied by the Salvadoran Army days before the elections in an effort to keep voters from the polls.

According to the source, the attacks on military targets, the downing of a helicopter, and increased fighting are a signal that the offensive is imminent.

The source recalled that FMLN Commander Joaquin Villalobos had warned before the elections that after the elections (last Sunday) the rebel units would attack the army.

Diplomatic circles in San Salvador have taken several precautionary measures in defense of possible guerrilla actions, according to reports in this country. The Salvadoran Army, which "appears to be informed" of the rebels' plans, has increased patrolling in San Salvadaor and has placed its units on alert to confront the FMLN offensive, sources in this country have announced.

For its part, the FMLN has noted the little interest shown by the government of President Alfredo Cristiani in the dialogue and in the electoral fraud denounced a few hours ago by the country's leftist opposition. [passage omitted]

Political circles in the Costa Rican capital have learned that some diplomats, including those of Costa Rica, have been advised of the danger of a new offensive, which the guerrillas reportedly will launch "as a show of strength" before the new round of negotiations.

FMLN Commander on Attacks, 'Secret Document'

PA1403050291 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0311 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Text] Guerrilla Commander Jesus Rojas has informed this newscast that the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] will adopt new positions at the next round of talks that may step up the negotiations process. Rojas said that the round of talks scheduled to take place at the end of March may become an important step in the negotiations process.

The FMLN, the rebel commander said, will make new statements at this round of talks to hasten the search for agreements and unfetter the Armed Forces issue.

Rojas was interviewed by the "Al Dia" newscast on 13 March in northern Chalatenango, where he is currently one of FPL's [Farabundo Marti People's Liberation Forces] top two leaders.

Regarding the 10 March elections, the guerrilla commander said that they were carried out in an adverse atmosphere for the opposition parties. He referred to the fraud that has been reported over the past few days by the Democratic Convergence [CD].

[Begin Rojas recording] I believe that the boycott against the CD was coldly calculated and planned. Army operations were carried out to prevent certain towns from voting because they supported the opposition, the leftwing. It is on these towns that the Armed Forces focused because they knew that they were the opposition parties'—especially the CD's—base of support.

From the very beginning I said that we would not endorse or acknowledge the legitimacy of these results. We believe that this conflict can be solved only through a global, negotiated agreement. [end recording]

Rojas said that despite these difficulties, the opposition parties' efforts have been valuable. He added that the abstentionism observed during the elections expressed the FMLN's points of view.

[Begin Rojas recording] The abstentionism observed in this election, which is said to have been approximately 50 percent, expressed many of the FMLN's points of view. A large segment of the population is skeptical—not about elections in general—but about these elections, which were carried out within a framework of intimidation, militarism, and a war that we must resolve by political means.

Arena's [Nationalist Republican Alliance] majority in the Legislative Assembly has prevented the solidification of many Interparty Commission agreements. Many of the agreements were fulfilled, but late. Perhaps the most important agreement was the one decreed by President Cristiani on the day before the elections, which was an old Interparty Commission agreement. [end recording]

Concerning the alleged secret document signed by the country's leading political parties to unfetter the negotiations process, Rojas said that the FMLN's view is that it is an Armed Forces document. We cannot be sure, he said, that the opposition parties were involved with that document.

To conclude, the rebel commander described rumors concerning a new FMLN offensive within the next few days as speculation, although he gave assurances that the guerrillas are planning new attacks against the Army.

Rebels Claim Responsibility for Downing Helicopter

PA1303190291 (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo Marti in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 13 Mar 91

[War bulletin issued by the 3rd Military Region of the National Army for Democracy in El Salvador on 12 March]

[Text] 1. In response to the aggressive actions of the antidemocratic Armed Forces, which have remained in territories under our control since 2 March, we report that today we launched an attack against two companies of the Ponce Battallion. The two companies had entered one of our areas of operations, located 10 km north of the city of San Miguel. The clashes began at 0945 [1545 GMT] in the Concepcion Corozal Canton, San Miguel jurisdiction, as members of the National Army for Democracy were patrolling the area. The fighting continued until 1600 [2200 GMT].

The report states that the first phase of the maneuver was concluded at 1530 [2130 GMT], with the following results: One UH-1M gunship helicopter was downed and one UH-1M gunship helicopter was damaged. In addition, we inflicted 15 casualties on the Ponce Battalion and three casualties on the Air Force, which amounts to 18 progovernment Army casualties altogether.

In addition, our units seized one M-69 rocket launcher, one military communication radio PRC-77, five backpacks, and other war materiel.

3. [number as heard] The helicopter was downed and destroyed at 1445 [2045 GMT] by our antiaircraft units. In addition, the helicopter fell in the eastern part of the Altomiro Canton, 8 km from San Miguel.

The second UH-1M helicopter, which was seriously damaged, was forced to make an emergency landing south of San Antonio Chavez.

Meanwhile, the Ponce Battalion companies have fled in disarray, and our units are chasing them and combing the area.

4. At 1530 [2130 GMT], two A-37 planes overflew this heavily populated area. In the combing operations, our forces found three dead members of the Ponce Battallion. Our forces found personal identification papers on two of the dead members of the Ponce batallion; they are soldier Orlando Lopez de la Paz Cordoba and soldier Margarito Cesar Amaya.

We also report to all our people that we sustained one light casualty.

[Signed] Command of Operations of the 3rd Military Region,

National Army for Democracy

Telecommunications Workers Begin 2-Day Strike

PA1203183791 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2055 GMT 11 Mar 91

[Text] San Salvador, 11 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—Today 500 employees of the Salvadoran telecommunications enterprise began a two-day strike demanding better salaries and working conditions, a union source has reported.

Reynaldo Orantes, spokesman of the Salvadoran Association of ANTEL [National Administration for Telecommunications] Workers, told ACAN-EFE that employees have occupied the commercial office in San Salvador.

However, communications services are normal throughout the country, where municipal and legislative elections were held yesterday in a relatively calm atmosphere although clashes between the Army and guerrillas left 19 dead.

Communications workers are demanding, among other things, a retirement with 100 percent of their salaries for workers with more than 30 years of service, better labor conditions, and a wage increase of 500 colones (62 dollars) per month.

Orantes said that the government wants to privatize the telecommunications company and that authorities have not replied to the demands included in a document presented by the workers 18 months ago.

Armed Forces Press Committee Chief Appointed

PA1103204291 San Salvador Radio Cadena Horizonte in Spanish 1800 GMT 7 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Lieutenant Colonel Airman Baltazar Lopez Hernandez was appointed today as new chief of the Armed Forces Press Committee [Coprefa], reported the Army's information office. [passage omitted]

The High Military Command of the Armed Forces has appointed Lt. Col. Airman Baltazar Lopez Hernandez as new chief of the Coprefa to replace Lt. Col. Mauricio Chavez Caceres, who died in a car accident on 2 March.

Upon assuming his duties today, Lt. Col. Lopez Hernandez said that he will carry out his duties with the same enthusiasm as his predecessor in order to continue strenghtening democracy, from the information standpoint. This, he added, will allow us to attain the longed-for peace for all Salvadorans.

Lt. Col. Lopez Hernandez also expressed his desire to cooperate with both the local and domestic media. This, he added, is a medium of vital importance for the development of the people. [passage omitted]

Guatemala

Government To Discuss 5 Points With URNG

PA1203163291 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2343 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Guatemala City, 6 Mar (NOTIMEX)—The Guatemalan Government has agreed to discuss five basic points with the guerrillas to initiate a dialogue, sources close to the participants in the peace negotiations have reported.

The Guatemalan Government has reportedly agreed to discuss with the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) the five basic points proposed by the guerrillas as a "conceptual framework" to find a political solution to end 30 years of armed conflict.

The source, who asked not to be identified, said that President Serrano has mentioned the five points on various occasions.

On 30 May 1990, the URNG proposed the following "institutional changes to democratize the country:"

1. Eliminate the Civil Defense patrols, development centers, and the civil protection system.

2. Abolish and abrogate the decrees issued during the past days of Oscar Mejia's de facto government.

3. Amend constitutional articles that deny or limit the exercise and development of real democracy.

4. Reorganize, supress, and [word indistinct] repressive organizations and place the security and police forces strictly under the judicial branch.

5. Define and stipulate the state's role in the country's economic development.

The source said that the government-URNG dialogue could begin soon. NOTIMEX has learned from guerrilla sources in Costa Rica that the first meeting could take place in the next few weeks in San Jose.

President Serrano will be in Costa Rica between 18 and 20 March. While there, he will open the school year at the La Paz University with a lecture.

On 5 March members of the URNG command spoke with Costa Rican Foreign Ministry officials about the possibility of holding the dialogue in San Jose. The peace process began in March 1990 with the signing of the Oslo agreement by Guatemala's guerrillas and social sectors. Meetings were held in various cities all over the world in 1990, with the participation of Guatemala's political parties, churches, businessmen, labor unions, popular sectors, professional associations, cooperative members, small businessmen, and refugee representatives.

Upon taking office on 17 January, President Serrano pledged to achieve the country's pacification by political means and to negotiate with the armed groups.

[Words indistinct] peace, with the National Reconciliation Commission's mediation, [words indistinct] in accordance with the Oslo agreements concerning the (?government) and Army's direct dialogue with the URNG.

Government Communique

PA1303151791 Guatemala City DIARIO DE CENTRO AMERICA in Spanish 12 Mar 91 p 9

["Text" of "official" Guatemalan Government communique]

[Text] Given the news reports about the URNG's [Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity] interest in sponsoring a meeting with the president of the Republic in San Jose, Costa Rica, this month, we report that:

1. The Guatemalan Government is pleased to see that the URNG is willing to achieve progress in the peace process;

2. The Guatemalan Government would like to see that willingness accompanied by a suspension in the guerrilla groups' terrorist acts, including the destruction of briges and telephone towers, which cause so much damage to the Guatemalan people;

3. The National Reconciliation Commission is in charge of everything aimed at achieving peace—so the commission should handle the initiatives presented by the parties involved in the peace process;

4. The government foresees no contacts with the URNG during President Serrano's visit to Costa Rica this month.

Government Creates Social Pact Commission

PA1303143591 Guatemala City EL GRAFICO in Spanish 4 Mar 91 p 6

[Text] Guatemala City, 4 March—The Social Pact Commission has been created as part of the government agreement signed on 2 March by President Serrano and his entire cabinet in the banquet room of the Presidential Palace.

This commission will consist of 10 representatives from the labor sector, 10 representatives from the business sector, and four representatives from the organized cooperatives. The ministers of labor, economy, finance, agriculture, and development, as well as the commissioner for the regulation of state resources, will represent the government in the commission.

The commission will also include four representatives for the president of the Republic. In the event the ministers are absent, the deputy ministers will represent them.

The Social Pact Commission called for the participation of the Guatemalan Workers' General Central Organization (CGTG); the Guatemalan Confederation for Trade Union Unity (CUSG); the National Federation of State Workers Union (Fenasteg); the Federation of Bank Employees Trade Unions (Feseb); and the Guatemalan Workers' Trade Union, Unsitragua.

The commission called on the aforementioned organizations to invite labor unions and other labor organizations without any affiliation to establish the guidelines for reaching consensus on the social pact. This will lead to the appointment of the representatives from the labor sector in a democratic and pluralistic manner with the participation of labor groups.

The commission also asked the Coordinating Committee of Farming, Commercial, Industrial, and Financial Associations (CACIF) to invite representatives of the business organizations and association members, as well as nonmembers, so that they too can appoint their representatives.

The commission also asked the Guatemalan Confederation of Cooperative Federations [Confederacion Guatemalteca de Federaciones Cooperativas] (Confecop) and the Great Union of Non-Affiliated Cooperatives (Gran Union de Cooperativas no Federadas) (Guconof) to invite their representatives.

The rules establish that the Social Pact delegates will not be paid.

CGTG To Join Social Pact

PA1303024191 Guatemala City Teleonce Television in Spanish 0400 GMT 4 Mar 91

[Text] The Guatemalan Workers' General Central Organization, CGTG, will be one of the labor groups participating in the social pact. A few days after the government announced its intention to call for a social pact, the CGTG proposed a solidarity pact that would include the following four main areas: economic, social, cultural, and political.

Labor Minister Mario Solorzano has commented on the government's position with regard to this solidarity pact proposed by the CGTG.

[Begin Solorzano recording] The CGTG proposal contains a very important point. The concept of this pact is that workers should be represented. The [word indistinct] CGTG is broad, but the government believes it is very important to have workers and businessmen at the discussion table. [end recording]

Four Labor Groups Decline

PA1303185191 Guatemala City SIGLO VEINTIUNO in Spanish 12 Mar 91 p 3

[Text] Four of the country's main labor federations, the Labor and Popular Action Union (UASP), Guatemalan Workers' Trade Union (Unsitragua), National Federation of State Workers Unions (Fenasteg), Federation of Bank and Insurance Employees Unions (Fesebs), have decided not to participate in the project being advocated by President Serrano Elias, because they consider it is "excluding."

During independent general assemblies, some of the aforementioned labor federations decided that it would be impractical to "play along" with the current regime which only applies its "usual political argument, which is significantly different from what it does in practice."

During a news conference held on the afternoon of 11 March, Romeo Monterrosa [not further identified] said: "The process is faulty because it marginalizes the majority of the population: the Indian nation." He added: "Laws

continue to be used wrongly and to the detriment of the Guatemalan working class as can be seen with the massive firings and low wages."

Monterrosa said that the UASP finds it unacceptable for the powerful groups to attempt to negotiate the education, health, and housing benefits given to the less priviledged Guatemalans. Romeo Monterrosa also reminded President Serrano that he still has not implemented the "National Peace Agreement" promised during his political campaign.

Fesebs leader Max Siguenza stated on the night of 11 March: "Concretely, conditions are not adequate for us to participate in a debate to reach a social pact." Fesebs insisted that the call made by the executive branch should not be exclusive and should include everyone.

"Our proposal refers to matters such as increasing the scope of the debates by including the participation of the students and the people. We also propose that a price control policy be set once again to stop the people's exploiters from gaining profits based on the hunger of the Guatemalan people," Siguenza added.

Fenasteg Secretary General Armando Sanchez announced on 11 March that the general assembly, which met for eight hours, had reached the decision not to participate in the "Social Pact" and that this "no" was flat and final "because there are no conditions for a dialogue."

The union leader added: "After consulting with our bases, we have concluded that the minimum conditions required to present proposals do not exist and that President Serrano does not have the capacity to keep the commitments that may be reached."

Presidential spokesman Manuel Conde regretted the attitude taken by the workers' unions and their decision not to participate in the discussions for the pact. He emphasized that "while the URNG [Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity] manifests its intentions to sit at a table to discuss the topic of peace, there are unions that refuse to participate and sign a social pact."

"The unions refuse to come to the negotiation table now that the new government, with a patriotic spirit, has made a serious call and a commitment to implement the Social Pact. They refuse when it is evident that only through reconciliation and understanding will Guatemala be able to advance," spokesman Conde Orellana stated.

Labor and Social Welfare Minister Mario Solorzano Martinez expects to receive the final response today from the labor federations that have expressed reluctance to participate in the Social Pact debates. He reported that a Summoning Agreement article empowers the executive branch to invite other organizations if any group refuses to attend the deliberations for the Social Pact.

CACIF [Coordinating Committee of Farming, Industrial, and Financial Associations] members also met on the night of 11 March to decide if they would particiate in the Social Pact debates. SIGLO VEINTIUNO was able to find out that there are possibilities that businessmen might attend the debates for the pact as they only question the degree of representation that the government will give the productive sector. Based on the plan prepared by the Labor Ministry, several CACIF members believe that many economic sectors will not be allowed to participate in the debates.

Honduras

Callejas, Carias To Visit Switzerland, Italy

PA0903132491 Tegucigalpa EL HERALDO in Spanish 7 Mar 91 p 33

[Text] President Rafael Leonardo Callejas will be absent from the country for nine days beginning 14 March when he and Foreign Minister Mario Carias Zapata will travel to Switzerland and Italy.

The president will hold talks with representatives of international organizations in Geneva. He will also visit Italy in response to an invitation from Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti.

Gilberto Goldstein, the president's private secretary, reported that the president's trip to Switzerland has been organized by international organizations to discuss topics of interest to Honduras.

In Rome, Italy, Callejas will sign agreements dealing with the export of coffee and bananas to the EEC. He will also sign an agreement through which Italy will finance an irrigation project in Valle Department.

Goldstein also denied that President Callejas will travel to Spain and France, as had been rumored in the past few days.

The president will return to Tegucigalpa on 23 March. Therefore, he will not need permission from the National Congress to leave the country, as the Constitution mandates for trips over 15 days.

On another topic, Goldstein confirmed that the executive branch headquarters will be transferred to the Secplan [Planning Secretariat] building in three months and not this month, as had been announced.

He explained that this is due to some delays in Secplan's transfer to the Housing Institute (Inva) building, which is also located in the so-called "Government Civic Center."

* President Callejas on Administration, Plans

91CA0077B San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 12 Feb 91 pp 5, 34

[Interview with President Rafael Leonardo Callejas by unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[Text] Tegucigalpa—He is the most widely hailed man in recent political history in Honduras. He is the man who won the hearts of the people and whose promises even attracted thousands of adversaries into his political fold from the opposition party. He is the alternative man, the man of new energy, the man who was upset over the fact that the government in power had us eating iguana.

A little over a year ago, he symbolized hope. Today, his name is still the most frequent one on the lips of Hondurans, but he is no longer described in affectionate or kindly terms. Regardless of their political affiliation, people excoriate him. They blame him for their troubles, for their economic hardships. They feel cheated, hoodwinked, duped. They voted for change and got fleeced.

To make matters worse, this man, now in power, admits magnanimously that he cannot be emotional in evaluating his own performance in office, because his function "is not to be popular or unpopular" and he cannot afford to have any emotions, "to be happy or sad" about decisions that are consistent with his philosophy.

Yes, in an interview with TIEMPO, Rafael Leonardo Callejas comes right out and says that when we ask him if he feels happy with the results of his first year in office.

"I have learned that your state of mind is not like that here; you do not get sad or happy. In my case, I simply have a very clear goal: to turn over the country in better shape than the way I received it. I will only be happy when that happens. Meanwhile, there are only short-term situations. I have stated very clearly that my function here is not to be popular or unpopular, not to receive applause or smiles."

He bursts out laughing when we remind him of his ingenious television ads, when he told us that the Liberals had us eating iguana, whereas now the people say we do not even get to eat iguana.

"And it is true, in some cases, and this situation should be described and seen in terms of the fact that the first year has been primarily to emphasize the solution to the country's basic problem, which in our opinion is the budget deficit. Too much consumption by the government."

Now "excess government is not evaporating, it is not disappearing. Who pays for excess government? The people. That is the basis of my entire campaign, when we talked about having a balanced budget. But to attain that balance, to put the public financial house in order, someone has to pay the bill, and that is the heart of the matter, the bottom line: Who pays the bill? The people."

Cajellas has his own interpretation of the popular feeling of disappointment, of having been cheated by CAMBIO's unfulfilled promises.

"It depends on how you define the agenda. If I ask the Honduran people if they feel satisfied with foreign relations, with the fact that there are no Contras in the country, what will be their answer?"

He claims that this popular frustration is focused specifically on the economic problem. "And who is complaining the loudest?" he says. "The consumer, the urban consumer. Who can be the most satisfied? The producer who has access to prices."

"The urban consumer, the rural consumer, the wage-earner, they are in very precarious and difficult situations, and in the short-term, this year, they have been hurt instead of helped. Consequently, they are right."

Callejas admits that "the income of the average citizen, in terms of the adjustment, has basically been cut in half. That is, he is twice as poor, and that is a fact. For this reason, they rightly believe that the promises have not been kept."

If the assessment of his economic program is not positive, believes Callejas, it is because "the citizen makes decisions every day, and every day there are problems. Consequently, he cannot say anything different or express himself any other way; he has no reason to."

"I can see things in terms of three years, but he (the citizen) has no reason to see it that way. He sees them today, and today he sees the rates of the National Water and Sewage Service (SANAA) going up, in some cases, he sees the National Enterprise for Electric Power (ENEE) raising its rates, he sees fuel going up, he sees the price of milk going up, he sees medicines going up. Therefore, the citizen is right: At this moment, he cannot be happy."

According to Callejas, the situation will change in the latter two years of his administration, but the people will not exactly be lying in a bed of roses then. No, by that time they will have to be content with "a hope, a vitality, a different dynamic in the national economy."

His self-evaluation yields an "acceptable year" and an "extremely complicated year" because he inherited a country, he repeats, that was "overshadowed by the characteristics of the past: disorganized finances, excessive spending, worldwide ineligibility, lack of credibility because of the fact that until a year ago our foreign policy had been completely dependent." In addition to this burden—inherited from the Liberal governments, it is assumed, because Callejas goes to great lengths to avoid mentioning his adversaries by name—he cites the negative effects of the SITRATERCO banana strike, the floods in the north, and the Persian Gulf conflict.

Dependency and Shortages

The shortages of many basic goods are due to the fact that "we are a country of chronic shortfalls in food production. We fall short of our milk needs by 70 percent. Historically, we have always had problems with milk at a certain time of year, and now the situation has been exacerbated by the floods."

"What we are trying to do is reconvert the country so that it will be self-sufficient in basic goods. There is no doubt that we have had problems, and often the problem has been, I admit it, due to false expectations on our part.

"From our point of view, if Honduran society is not oriented toward production according to the plan we propose in this administration, which is not necessarily accepted by all sectors, the country will remain a dependent nation.

"The country will remain dependent on imports of basic goods, dependent on friendly countries to maintain the flow of foreign exchange in dollars—in short, dependent

on poverty. And that is something that we are confronting once and for all; there has been no vacillating in that regard."

In the case of medicines, he says, he will maintain his policy of rejecting subsidies, "because the generalized subsidy reaches the poor man but benefits the rich man. Now anyone who wants free medicine has to go to the public hospitals. Anyone who wants to buy medicine for private practice must pay the price."

Cabinet and Evaluation

The CAMBIO Cabinet, primarily the "Chicago Boys," has been severely questioned by various groups who blame them directly for the harsh economic punishment that has been meted out during this first year of the administration. Critics say there are a lot of old faces in the cabinet, and that they are surrounded by advisers who are not exactly immaculate. Monsignor Luis Alfonso Santos claims that the same old thieves of the National Corporation for Investment (CONADI) can be found in the presidential palace.

[TIEMPO] Will Callejas serve out his administration with the same cabinet?

[Callejas] (Smiling) No, I do not know. That is a question I cannot answer right now. I still have the same cabinet this year.

[TIEMPO] You cannot assure us that you will end up with the same cabinet? [Callejas] No, this year, for example, one of my ministers will no longer be with me.

Callejas is referring to the defense minister, Colonel Francisco Zepeda Andino. He merely smiles when we observe that he did not remove that minister from office. "But it is no longer the same cabinet," he repeats.

[TIEMPO] So at least there is the hope that we will see new faces in the cabinet?

[Callejas] It depends. Right now, everything points in the opposite direction, especially in the economic cabinet. They cannot be popular, nor can they be greatly loved at this time, and they are the ones who are running a real program to adjust the economy, but it may be that they will improve conditions and be applauded.

[TIEMPO] But there are ministers who could be loved, for example those in the social area, such as Public Health. You do not necessarily need a controversial minister, yet there are situations like the medicine incident. There is now a report out from the Comptroller's Office. Are you familiar with it?

[Callejas] No, I do not have it.

Regarding the criticism of Cesar Castellanos for holding two jobs in Public Health (as minister and as a doctor at the Teaching Hospital), which has tarnished the government's image, we asked the president if he thinks what has occurred in this case is ethical.

[Callejas] Look, I think that he should answer that question, because he has given explanations about what he is doing. I would say that the questions that pertain to a given minister should be asked directly of him, because I think that the parameters of this interview should not include the analysis of a person; they should be limited to the general topic of the government's policy.

But they do include the way the people see the cabinet, because although it is true that the economic measures, part of the government's policy, are making some ministers unpopular, others are becoming unpopular for other reasons.

The answer, I repeat, is that I finished up this year with the same cabinet, and I do not know about the future.

[TIEMPO] Would you suggest that he be more forthcoming?

[Callejas] We are trying to be. I am not familiar with that report.

Corruption

Another obligatory question to the president is, "What is being done in your administration to do away with corruption once and for all?"

[Callejas] The most important thing is a way of behaving. We, I in particular, have met with all sectors and have engaged in dialogue with them. It is constantly on my agenda to ask them not to get involved in acts of corruption. I have personally talked to people who have had connections with the public sector to ask them to avoid—I am referring to political and economic groups—to avoid mobilizing resources for the purpose of reaping spoils or profits from the government.

Corruption is a moral behavior of society, not just of the government. It is very difficult to combat, but we are having success on many fronts. It can be seen in the indicators, in customs revenues. Small customs offices, such as El Amatillo, have increased their revenues by 800 percent.

I would like to say that in this regard, I cannot deny that there are conditions of dishonesty at the level of society and probably in some government sectors. There are people who go into government for their own profit. But in general terms, at the higher levels of the government of the republic, I believe corruption has been reduced to a minimum. At least no one is making any immoral offers to me, and I ask my higher-ranking officials not to accept this type of situation, either.

Our legislation is very complex, because it does not allow for the battle against corruption in public office or among public officials. The procedures and processes are complex.

I have spoken with the attorney general of the republic, with the comptroller general of the republic, and with Administrative Honesty, to emphasize that this problem must be solved. But the fact is that in this regard, I feel that during our first year in office we have not had a chance to punish those who supposedly created the disastrous conditions that plague the Honduran people in some areas.

The legal limitations and the limitations on our ability to file charges create too many difficulties for government agencies.

[TIEMPO] Would you say that your administration is more or less corrupt than its predecessors?

[Callejas] I would say that my administration is more honest than its predecessors.

How do you control your friends, your advisers, the people close to you, who might be using your name for their own benefit or in completely unethical acts? For example, there is the case of Emin Abufele and the toxic materials.

[Callejas] There is a presumption here whose origin we do not yet understand. The government of the republic never authorized toxic materials. We have never authorized the use of toxic materials in the country. There is a great subjective opposition that is without basis in fact. I am referring here to what we talked about a short time ago. There is no evidence, and if there is no evidence, how can charges be filed?

So we are correcting that. In my opinion, the whole reason for this concession is that there are groups who do not feel it is a good time to have land used for shrimp aquaculture in La Mosquitia.

In fact, I sent a note to the U.S. Government. There is a note at the American Environmental Protection Agency that sets forth the government's policy, which is that they should not authorize any company to request the transfer of toxic materials to Honduras because the Government of Honduras will not accept toxic products in the generation of any type of its programs.

[TIEMPO] But he denied from the beginning that he had any involvement in that company, and that in itself was misconstrued and aroused suspicion.

[Callejas] Sure, I agree with you, these things should be more straightforward.

In evaluating the performance of the government prosecutor, Callejas sees both positive and negative aspects. One of the negative aspects is that the Law on Administrative Litigation cost the government 19 million lempiras last year.

"One of the problems of the government which does not necessarily have to do with the present situation is the fact that many government representatives are not interested in defending the government; they simply see a government post as a way of wangling money for themselves, and that is of great concern to me.

"I have told all the institutions. I prefer that they contract with private law firms that will defend the interests of the state, rather than paying salaries of 1,200, 1,600 lempiras to people who do not go to work. We have talked to the attorney general. There are areas where the results have been good and there are those where the results have not been so good."

Electoral Policy

[TIEMPO] Do you think that the Electoral Law should be reformed as soon as possible to give the political parties a chance to adjust and adapt to the reforms?

[Callejas] Some of them yes, others no. I believe that people are making the mistake of launching premature political campaigns, and this should be regulated. I have asked different leaders of all the political parties to consider that proselytism, which is a civil right, is one thing, while political propaganda is quite another thing. To go into such a premature campaign with television ads at this juncture will create problems for the country. It will mean a precise decision by the party sectors and a sectarian action on the part of the Honduran people which is inconsistent with the real situation in the world and in the country.

"In this regard, the electoral reforms should have different orientations. The first is pluralism. We agree that conditions are being created for more political parties to exist, so that the method of forming new political parties will be clearly laid down, facilitated, and expedited, as long as everything falls within the country's legal framework."

He agrees that in the upcoming elections, there should be a separate vote for the municipal mayors. He also thinks "it is imperative that the decision be made" because things are moving too slowly on the residential vote.

"I think that there has been indecisiveness by the political parties, and we are two years away from internal elections. In that regard, the residential vote [voto domiciliario] is an important element of citizen participation, but time is getting away from us. And I would not want to pretend that if decisions are not made on this new legislation as quickly as possible, the electoral process can be adapted to the residential vote.

"In addition to that, it is imperative that the matter of publicity and propaganda be resolved, because in my opinion if we begin right now, the country will end up locked in a debate that has nothing to do with the national situation. The electoral law reforms should be carried out quickly; they must be done by means of consensus; and they must serve the best interests of the nation, not the interests of candidates or the best interests of party groups."

For that reason, he says, the interests of the parties and of the groups converge in the internal elections. There will be party candidates who want to hold them right away, and there will be those who want to postpone them.

"In my opinion, the internal party elections should take place in the short term, no more than 60 days should be allowed for publicity, and they should be held no more nor less than a year before the elections."

Opposition Promoting Itself

Whether or not the Callejas administration is a government without opposition is one of the most frequently discussed political issues.

And in Callejas' view, "what the opposition is doing is promoting itself; it is not forming opposition to the specific action of public administration, because when it comes time to debate, what people want for a certain sector, not necessarily a party political sector, is to impose their platform on the government's political plan."

He goes on to mention the changes in former President Jose Azcona's attitude. He says that when Azcona was in office, he was asked what he thought of the opposition of some other groups, and he said that the opposition was the National Party, and that the National Party was what counted.

"A short time ago I heard a commentary by him, and he said that some types of organizations expressed opinions and they should be heeded. The interesting thing is his change in behavior. What is opposition, and what is not opposition? It depends; one wants everything to be opposition when one is in the opposition, and one wants nothing to be opposition when one is in office."

He believes that the opposition in our country is oriented primarily toward the Economic Structural Reorganization program. "What happens is that instead of engaging in dialogue on the government's proposal, what they want to impose is an agenda for dialogue on a different program from the one the government has been developing. Because, basically, the opposition is to the economic aspect.

"We are saying specifically that we are orienting the economy toward a free market, toward a competitive market, toward external development. We aim to make the forces of the market implement the actions of efficiency in investment.

"We have established that the government is not the vital factor in development and that the country's fiscal policy must be more disciplined. That is our position as an administration, and in one way or another, with some variations, this is being implemented in the government plan of the National Party. And we do indeed have a government plan. It has been published and delivered, and we are adhering to it.

"We even evaluate how each institution in the administration is following the government plan. I think that has never been done before, for a party to evaluate whether the government is following the guidelines that the party presented to the people in its campaign platform.

"That is something that we are doing on a confidential basis. Someone tells me, the National Agrarian Institute is following the policy of the government plan; the Finance Ministry is doing it, or it is not doing it."

It has been impossible to negotiate a consensus, he says, because when meetings are held, "the opinions are so disparate, they are so far from one another, that one has the impression that what is being drawn up is a political platform, not a critical, constructive opposition to the government option."

"I see the opposition using this opportunity as a platform, a launching pad for the future, rather than an opportunity to criticize the present."

Referring openly to the traditional adversaries of Nationalism, he says, "What is happening is that the Liberal Party is undergoing an internal struggle, and what they are seeking is to build their own opportunities, rather than a legitimate opposition to the government."

Callejas cites himself as an example of what it means to engage in "constructive opposition." "Those are experiences that I have had myself. We engaged in some opposition at the beginning of the previous administration that was more oriented toward launching ourselves, and then later we engaged in constructive opposition. This enabled us to reach agreements in Congress to try to modify the economic strategies. "When we engaged in dialogue and consensus afterwards because of the opposition that was formed against the Liberal Party, which was in office at that time, we imposed certain limitations on the national budget, because overdrafts are against the law, they are a crime. We established criteria for promoting alternative solutions to the crisis that we faced."

Regarding the controversial decree on the sale of citizenship, there is no going back. According to Callejas, "that is a matter that was debated; it is not a shady move. We feel that it is better to make this type of condition clear than to do what was done in the past. If we go back to the past, we realize the tremendous negotiations that took place around these people. Look back and you will see what negotiations took place in this regard. In this case, it is the country that benefits. This is better than the illegal sale of citizenship that has taken place for many years, with a laissez-faire policy.

"We are going to carry out the opening of bidding for 5,000 investors from these countries or Hong Kong, and then we will propose that the law be repealed. I am going to let the next administration decide whether it wants to leave this law open or not. As soon as we fill the investment needs for the projects we want, and as soon as they are done, we will ask the Congress of the Republic to repeal this law."

Finally, Callejas says that his confidential entry amounts to just 600,000 lempiras. "My experience is that the confidential entry tends to get larger or smaller depending on the interests of the country in certain security aspects. But the confidential entry is 600,000 lempiras. That entry they claimed was so large, that it does not exist anymore."

* Finance Minister Reports on 1990 Achievements

91CA0077C Tegucigalpa LA TRIBUNA in Spanish 26 Jan 91 p 19

[Text] Finance Minister Benjamin Villanueva pointed out that one of the most important achievements of the administration's first year in office has been to put public finances in order and to organize monetary, exchange, and credit policies.

He stated that the commitments made in 1989 have been fulfilled: A budget deficit of about 1.2 billion lempiras had

been projected, and last year closed with a net deficit of 353 million lempiras, 2.9 percent of the GDP.

According to Villanueva, the autonomous institutions were practically bankrupt when the administration took office, with an operations deficit of about 50 million lempiras. This year, in contrast, they will yield a surplus of 194 million to 200 million lempiras.

Contrary to the opinion of the current opposition, Villanueva contends that there has been a program of investment for development, as many physical projects have been carried out.

In this regard, he pointed out that agricultural, industrial, and export investment programs have been promoted. "This proves that although attention has been focused on the program of economic stabilization or organization, not all the work that has been done has been visible to the eye."

He reported that capital spending was greater than in 1989 in absolute terms, "which means that projects were continued and public investment programs are being executed."

"The country's macroeconomic policy is also aimed at providing incentives for producers," he indicated, "especially rural and urban producers, which is having positive effects."

Villanueva attributed the rise in inflation to the disorderly fiscal and monetary policies he had inherited, which "led us to inflation rates of about 33 percent in 1990."

In addition, "the foreign debt, which amounted to 90 percent of the GDP, will be only 70.4 percent in 1990. This indicates that in relative terms the burden on the national economy has declined." All of this has been achieved in spite of the fact that the current government has had to obtain a bridge loan to make back payments. That loan has now been paid off, "and we are about to receive new financial resources. Many of them are donations, others are loans, which will help the country's economy," he stated.

The official indicated that one of the principal objectives of the economic organization program is to provide incentives for agricultural production for both domestic consumption and export, as well as industrial production.

The finance minister hopes to see the first positive signs in the country's private industry this year, and the initial indications are already apparent.

* IHCAFE Reports on Coffee Sales, Earnings

91CA0077D San Pedro Sula LA PRENSA in Spanish 31 Jan 91 p 2

[Text] Tegucigalpa—Honduras has earned more than 98 million lempiras in foreign exchange from coffee sales on the world market, reported spokesmen for the Honduran Coffee Institute (IHCAFE). They indicated that to date, 532,150 46-kilo sacks have been purchased for export.

Sources stated that exports total 239,250 sacks, which have been sold on traditional markets, where the Honduran product enjoys an excellent reputation for quality, and on the markets of new countries as well.

The figures reported correspond to the quarter that began in October and ended in December of last year.

A total of 191,994 46-kilo sacks were sold to traditional markets, 47,256 sacks to non-traditional markets.

In addition, it was reported that export taxes totaled 11.72 million lempiras. The foreign exchange figures are given at the exchange rate of 5.30 lempiras to the dollar.

IHCAFE officials stated that there is satisfaction with the results of the sales transactions conducted so far, especially since coffee prices have improved greatly in the final months of 1990 and the first month of this year.

It was also revealed that IHCAFE experts project a decline in production of 250,000 quintals, partly because of the low levels of fertilization on coffee plantations in 1989-1990.

Another cause is the shortage of manpower to harvest the beans. This problem attained disturbing proportions in some areas of production, partly due to military recruitment.

* Human Rights Group: Police Torture Prisoners

91CA0077A San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 29 Jan 91 p 16

[Text] Tegucigalpa—The Committee of Relatives of Disappeared Detainees in Honduras (COFADEH) claimed yesterday that seven people, among them a child, were arrested and subjected to torture by members of the Public Security Force (Fusep) and the National Directorate of Investigations (DNI) in Sulaco, Yoro. They said that the detainees had to bribe authorities in order to gain their release.

The arrests were made between 18 and 24 January, after the peasants were accused by merchant Noel Bonilla Alvarado of stealing 10,000 lempiras that he had lost in a drunken spree.

The officers arrested and then tortured the laborers without any prior investigation. According to COFADEH, they were acting illegally, since the case should have been brought to the appropriate court.

Arrested were: Marcos Reinero Castro, Eduardo Alguero, Edilberto Calderon, Oscar Gamez, Jose Santos Flores, Osman Flores (nine years), and Servando Galeas Banegas.

Yesterday they were at the COFADEH headquarters in this capital, where they showed the press evidence of the torture to which they had been subjected.

They explained that during their detention, the police had put the famous hood on them; had kicked them in the stomach, chest, and back; had punched them in the thorax and face; and had hit them with sharp objects on various parts of the body.

They also stated that at night they would be taken out of their cells and driven to the community of Yorito, and that on the way there they were shown the chasms and told they would be killed there.

The whole purpose was so that the detainees would "give back" the money they had supposedly stolen, which was found in a bag by other residents and turned in to the police.

The peasants said they feared for their lives, as the police officers threatened to kill them if they made a public complaint.

The child, Osman Flores, had serious injuries and seemed to forget momentarily the terrible punishment the police had given him.

COFADEH, after filing a collective writ of habeas corpus on behalf of the detainees in the city of Yoro, won their freedom on 24 and 25 January. It also filed charges in the Criminal Court of that city.

Yesterday the peasants were taken to a medical center so that the injuries and psychological effects that resulted from the torture could be verified.

COFADEH leaders stated that they will file formal charges with the three branches of government, the Armed Forces, and the Commission for the Defense of Human Rights in Central America (CODEHUCA).

The detainees, for their part, will file formal criminal charges against the officers and personnel involved in this violation of their constitutional rights.

In addition, they said that they intend to sue them for the crime of extortion, as the officers charged them between 100 and 400 lempiras each to release them, without giving them any receipt.

Accused of these acts are: Sgt. Bardales Sanchez, chief of the Fusep in Sulaco; Sgt. Rigoberto Zepeda Flores, chief of the DNI in Yoro; and Officers Hugo Regalado and Angel Edilberto Berner, as well as assistant Amilcar Hernandez and Army 2nd Lt. Guillermo Santos Moran.

Nicaragua

Official Urges Hotel Workers To Suspend Strike

PA1403020591 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 13 Mar 91 p 16

[Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Ernesto Leal participated in negotiations with the hotel workers last night and asked them to declare a "truce," and to suspend the strike on the eve of the Central American Foreign Ministers' meeting, which is being financed by the EEC.

After a round of talks with the Mitrab [Labor Ministry] failed, however, some of the spokesmen reported that the strikers were threatened and told that they would face the consequences if they did not change their attitude. Labor Minister Francisco Rosales, Tourism Minister Alvaro Chamorro, and a Government Ministry delegate participated in the meeting.

Fernando Malespin, the Intercontinental Hotel workers' legal adviser, said: "We accepted the management's proposal for a 260-percent increase retroactive to March, provided that it is increased to 158 on 1 April, so that we will eventually get a 418-percent increase." Nevertheless, the offer was rejected.

The government issued a "counterproposal" for a 200-percent increase, which the workers rejected by arguing that the devaluation surpasses that figure.

Deputy Foreign Minister Leal appealed to the hotel workers' "patriotism," adding that $360 million in financial aid to Nicaragua is at stake at the foreign minister's conference.

The labor leader said: "We told the government officials that they must meet our just demands if they want the foreign ministers' meeting."

Meanwhile, the Jinotepe, Montelimar, and Camino Real hotels joined the strike last night, leaving the country virtually without lodging or food services for the guests who will attend the San Jose VII meeting.

Some Strikers Reach Accord

PA1403025091 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0046 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Excerpts] Managua, 13 Mar (ACAN-EFE)—The workers at the Las Mercedes Hotel, one of Managua's most important, ended the strike which they began yesterday after reaching an agreement with the administration, a hotel management spokesperson has announced.

Another strike, which had lasted a few hours at the Camino Real Hotel, was also settled through negotiation, the same source added.

Only the Intercontinental Hotel is still on strike, but the workers and management are holding negotiations in an effort to end the strike. [passage omitted]

Unconfirmed reports by the strikers indicate that the workers reduced their wage demands, which in turn facilitated the negotiations.

Workers Occupy Sandino Airport Installations

PA1303202191 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1816 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Managua, 13 Mar (NOTIMEX)—A group of workers has occupied the installations of the Augusto Cesar Sandino International Airport, according to Radio Nicaragua, the official government radio station.

Approximately 150 riot policemen guarding the airport did not attempt to prevent the occupation, but withdrew to the surrounding area to await government instructions on the measures they were to take, according to the radio station.

The government had reinforced police surveillance at the airport in view of increasing rumors of an imminent action by members of the pro-Sandinist National Workers Front (FNT), according to sources who were consulted.

The occupation of the airport installations came only a few hours after a strike at the Nicaraguan Energy Institute left extensive sectors of the capital without electricity.

The workers are apparently trying to pressure the government into agreeing to a 325-percent wage increase to offset the impact of a 400-percent devaluation of the cordoba, according to labor leaders.

A total paralization of work at the Sandino Airport could affect the meeting of foreign ministers from Central America, the EC, the United States, Canada, and the Group of Three (Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela).

The meeting, known as "San Jose VII," is scheduled to begin on Monday, with the ministerial delegations due to arrive over the next few days.

Independent Health Workers Threatened by Strikers

PA1303192491 Managua LA PRENSA in Spanish 12 Mar 91 p 2

[Article by Celso Canelo C.]

[Excerpts] The independent health workers unions have repudiated the attitude assumed by the Fetsalud [Health Workers Federation], because it is not allowing the workers to resume their duties at the hospitals. Likewise, they have asked the government to offer the doctors and nurses who wish to work the necessary guarantees.

Dr. Alejandro Lagos, leader of the Independent Health Workers Federation [Federacion Independiente de Trajabadores de la Salud—FITS], has said that 95 percent of the workers at the Aldo Chavarria, Psychiatric, Velez Paiz, Lenin Fonseca, Carlos Marx, Bertha Calderon hospitals, and at six other health centers, have expressed their willingness to return to work, but Fetsalud groups will not let them return to work. [passage omitted]

The workers at the Ciudad Sandino Health Center have charged that Roberto Somoza, former Ciudad Sandino mayor, is using people armed with AK-47 rifles and fragmentation grenades to intimidate the workers who want to return to work. Likewise, the FITS secretary general at the Nandaime Hospital charged that the hospital director is repressing the workers who do not support the strike and has threatened to fire them.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Ernesto Salmeron said that the government is willing to solve the conflict and continue with the negotiations. Minister Salmeron added that the government's job reclassification proposal is still open. This proposal would benefit more than 80 percent of the workers in the health sector.

CPT Position on Economic Stabilization Plan

PA1303162591 Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish 11 Mar 91 p 6

[Paid ad publishing statement by the Permanent Workers' Congress (CPT) issued in Managua on 6 March]

[Text] In view of the implementation by the government of the economic adjustment plan, we publicly state our position, convoking the country's active forces to act with total responsibility and patriotism.

The CPT feels that the Nicaraguan economy, weakened by devaluation and inflation, became an unbearable and unacceptable reality for our people, who have waged a tenacious struggle to survive and face the crude reality that has prevented them from having access to the basic conditions and benefits of a dignified life, and has kept them in a deplorable state of poverty and misery.

Based on this analysis, made from a genuine workers' position, we believe that although the economic adjustment plan may not be the the most ideal, the truth is that in reality, it represents a costly but necessary formula. With the active and patriotic participation of our society, it should direct our country toward economic stabilization, leaving behind once and for all the causes of the current economic chaos.

The CPT invites economic, social, political, and intellectual forces to face this challenge with the same energy and enthusiasm displayed during the electoral campaign and to work for the success of the necessary economic stabilization plan. Together we must face those who, lacking patriotic feelings, are bent on causing more harm to our people by sabotaging the efforts to put an end to an inherited crisis.

The CPT emphatically declares that workers will not bear most of the burden of the economic stabilization process on their shoulders and that the business sector and the government should bear their quota of sacrifice. Businessmen should renounce inflated profits, and the government should eliminate squandering, fully joining the efforts of all. Consequently, we reject the idea that the poor will have to bear other than the necessary and essential quota of sacrifice.

Because of all this, we are hereby proposing the following to the national salvation government, workers, Nicaraguan people, and international community.

Efficiency in guaranteeing basic supplies for the population; a vigorous administration of justice against those who intend to profit by plunging the people into even greater poverty; broad willingness for dialogue rejecting the actions of those who threaten the people by trying to destabilize the state institutions; elimination of economic privileges of government officials and state enterprises; availability of the necessary funds to guarantee production, because there cannot be stabilization without production; invite the concerted agreement's directors and participants so we all can discuss and perfect the strategy of the economic stabilization plan.

We are hereby calling the Nicaraguan people and workers in general to stay alert so that all those who speculate on our needs and feelings cannot remain unpunished. We are calling them to be prepared to occupy our working places in cities and rural areas to make manufacturing plants and lands productive, convinced that with our workforce and

labor discipline we will raise production sufficiently to overcome our poverty and misery.

We cannot disregard the fact that those who today demand large salary raises are the same who imposed the fateful National System for the Organization of Work and Salaries [SNOTS], imposing on us meager salaries and exhausting work shifts, while administrative corruption destroyed the national wealth. In addition, we cannot forget about those who became rich illegally and never legalized the possession of a single plot of land for urban dwellers.

We are hereby demanding the solidarity of the international community, which should assist us with loans and donations so that we can implement a steady development process and overcome our current situation as a nation dependent on international public assistance. The democratic governments and the peoples of the world should help the national salvation government, which was elected by the people's will, a government that offers peace instead of war, reconciliation instead of hatred, economic stability instead of devaluation and inflation, jobs instead of joblessness, and integration instead of Central American destabilization.

For this and many other reasons, we expect the international community to make a greater effort to help our country. In addition, we are hereby urging the enactment of a minimum salary law and the urgent stipulation of this salary so that the nominal salaries can be raised and the true salary can be strengthened based on this reference and the profitability of the enterprises.

Managua, 6 March 1991.

CPT Executive Committee.

[Signed] Jose Espinoza N., secretary general of CUS [Confederation for Trade Union Unity], Alejandro Solorzano, secretary of national and international relations of CGT [General Confederation of Labor], Roberto Moreno, secretary general of CAUS [Central Organization of Trade Union Action and Unity], Mario Casco of the Union Federation of Nicaraguan Teachers, and Antonio Jarquin, secretary general of CTN [Central Organization of Nicaraguan Workers] (Autonomous).

Spanish General To Discuss Army Cooperation

PA0803161191 Managua Sistema Nacional de Television Network in Spanish 0200 GMT 6 Mar 91

[Text] Spanish General Maldonado who heads the Spanish Defense Ministry delegation that arrived this morning in Nicaragua to discuss, among other points, the transformation of the Nicaraguan Army and the restructuring of its cadres.

[Begin Maldonado recording] I have come to hold talks with the Sandinist People's Army to reach agreements on cooperation programs. [end recording]

The Spanish Government will provide advice in the fields of defense and the Armed Forces. Maldonado also explained the role that armies should play in time of peace.

[Begin Maldonado recording] In addition to its dissuasion role in defending national sovereignty and territorial integrity, the Army can cooperate in civil defense activities at time of disasters such as floods and [words indistinct]. [end recording]

Colonel [as heard] Maldonado will be in the country for two weeks.

Panama

Moscow, Panama City To Establish Consulates

PA1403010091 Panama Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2315 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Interview with Foreign Minister Julio Linares by an unidentified reporter in Panama City on 13 March—recorded; broadcast in progress]

[Text] [Linares] ....establishment of diplomatic relations between Panama and the USSR, even though it will be done at the consulate general level in Panama City and Moscow is justified because the democratic opportunities which have occurred in Eastern Europe are mostly due to the policy carried out by President Gorbachev. Even though the current situation within the USSR is not clear enough—at least, not as we would like it to be—the reestablishment... [corrects himself] the establishment of diplomatic or consular relations with the USSR will represent Panama's endorsement to the Soviet Government so that it may continue along the path toward democratization.

[Reporter] Have relations with Cuba improved, Mr. Foreign Minister?

[Linares] That is what I have.... [changes thought] I believe that there has been an improvement. There has been an improvement because Cuba previously questioned, in every international forum, the new government's legitimacy, but it is not doing that anymore. Perhaps.... [changes thought] we have already discussed this issue with the journalists who interviewed me yesterday. Perhaps that is where the bad, or somewhat erroneous, information came from. There has been an improvement because I met the Cuban foreign minister during two international meetings and he did not question Panama's presence there—in fact he greeted me quite cordially.

Linares' Comments on Cuba, Peru, USSR Detailed

PA1303170591 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 13 Mar 91 p 30A

[Report by Franco Rojas F.]

[Text] The Panamanian Government has launched a diplomatic offensive to reestablish relations with Cuba and the countries of the Rio Group. Ties with these countries were seriously affected after high-ranking members of the former military regime sought refuge at several Latin American embassies following the U.S. invasion of Panama in December 1989.

In statements to a small group of reporters who visited him in his office yesterday, Panamanian Foreign Minister Julio Linares said that it is necessary for Panama to strengthen its political, economic, and cultural ties with Latin America because Panama cannot live with its back turned on the international community.

The Panamanian Foreign Ministry has appointed Elba de Diaz as Panamanian consul to Cuba. Mrs. Diaz will be travelling shortly to that Caribbean island and her presence in Havana will represent the beginning of a new phase in the bilateral relations with Fidel Castro's regime.

Panama has also initiated a process of rapprochement with the USSR following its political opening, known as perestroyka, which is being implemented by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev.

The foreign minister said that Panama, signatory of the Caracas Convention on diplomatic asylum rights, has not placed obstacles to the granting of safeconducts requested by embassies housing Noriega followers when it has been proven that these persons are only being charged with crimes of a political nature. However, the minister added, we cannot allow the soldiers who sought refuge at the Peruvian Embassy to leave the country because they are facing charges for murders committed following the foiled coup against Noriega in October 1989. "Granting them (Noriega's soldiers) a safeconduct would be the same as dealing a tremendous moral blow to the nation, and we are not going to do this," Linares stressed.

Panama has even suggested taking these cases before an international court; however, it is evident that the countries involved, in this case Cuba and Peru, do not wish to have this problem brought before the International Court of Justice or any other court of arbitration and have chosen to go before the Group of Rio.

The minister explained that those two countries are aware, as we are, that the right to asylum is "something sacred" for all Latin Americans. "We are not denying them the right to asylum and the situation we are in bothers us. Latin America has had dictators of all ideologies and of all kinds and colors, and if at a some time we should fall into the hands of a dictatorship, the only way out the democrats would have would be to seek refuge in an embassy," the diplomat stressed.

"Unfortunately, the conventions signed to protect democrats when they are running from tyrants is being applied in reverse. We are going from a tyranny to a democracy and that is what has brought on the problems," Linares said.

Meanwhile, the Panamanian diplomat denied that the country continues to be occupied by U.S. troops as important opposition leaders have said.

The 13,500 U.S. soldiers brought to Panama to participate in the invasion were withdrawn from the country on 13 February 1990. Only those soldiers who were stationed along the banks of the canal remained behind, that is, approximately 13,500 soldiers as established in the treaty signed with Washington in 1977. That number has now dropped to less than 10,000, the foreign minister added.

Since September, only 50 U.S. military police in Panama City and five in Colon are carrying out courtesy patrols with the Panamanians, and "that cannot be called occupation," the foreign minister concluded.

U.S. Money Laundering Charges Challenged

PA1303225891 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 10 Mar 91 p 1A

[Article by Julia Elena Alvear]

[Text] National Banking Association [ABN] President Edgardo Lasso Valdes expressed surprise over statements made by the U.S. assistant secretary of state for drug affairs on the increase of money laundering activities in the Panama banking center.

"If the U.S. authorities have proof, they should present it to the Panamanian Government, because we are the first to be interested in curbing the illegal use of Panamanian banks for money laundering activities," Lasso Valdes said.

According to the ABN president, with or without an agreement, Panama is cooperating with foreign authorities; indeed, every time it sends a message to a bank ordering the freezing of bank accounts that are under investigation, it is done.

The banker believes Panama must sign the Mutual Legal Assistance Agreement, as long as it excludes U.S. tax evasion.

He also pointed out that the statements made by Melvin Levitsky, U.S. secretary for drug affairs, "adversely affect" the image of our banking center, and he said, "We cannot accept that all bankers, who represent banks all over the world, including U.S. banks, are laundering money."

"Not even in the United States, where sophisticated systems are used, have they been able to detect all those who are laundering money. I do not see how they can suggest that in Panama, despite the existing supervision, this activity is going on at the rate they are talking about."

Endara Rejects Credentials Commission Proceedings

PA1403014791 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2308 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] The president strongly rejected today the situation that occurred yesterday at the commission of credentials at the Legislative Assembly, describing it as illegal. President Endara made these statements at a brief news conference at the presidential palace:

[Begin Endara recording] These actions are completely illegal. In the case of the National Assembly, the penal code clearly establishes the proper steps that should be taken. The steps taken yesterday were totally illegal. This act has been described as democratic, in order to justify it; I believe just the opposite. The essential element in making the act democratic was missing: I was not there nor was my representative.

What would I have said if I or my representative had been present? I would have said, yes, it is true. I would assume the responsibility for making the decision on 5 May [date as heard]. One of the most difficult decisions a Panamanian can make, especially a nationalist Panamanian, and more so an Arnulfist Panamanian, is to request help from a foreign government during a coup d'etat. We are at the beginning of a democratic process which the plotters were attempting to smother just as it was emerging. We had to defend our democracy above all.

I made that decision under circumstances which I have already explained and I accept the responsibility. However, I do not want to leave the impression that this decision was made exclusively by the president, because this was not the case. [end recording]

Chorrillo Refugees Block Road; Police Use Gas

PA1303200091 Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 1735 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] The Chorrillo refugees caused a big traffic jam in the Santa Eduvigis neighborhood, Tocumen corregimiento. At 0600 this morning, they blocked the Domingo Diaz Highway at the entrance to Pedregal. They were protesting the fact that the government has not kept a series of promises made to them. The road block caught thousands of workers, who were on their way to work in downtown Panama City, by surprise. Most of the people had to walk part of the way to get to work, and even though they made it, they were late. In light of the confusion in the area, the people were forced to begin the journey to work very early, while others had to park their cars on the side of the road, running the risk of their cars being stolen. A spokesperson for the demonstrators said:

[Begin unidentified speaker recording] We are protesting several things. First, we have been told that the material used to build the roofs causes cancer. At night we do not sleep because particles fall from the roof, and make our skin itch. The children are getting what looks like white spots all over their body. Drops of water concentrate on the roof at night. The other day we had a very slight rainfall and the water filtered through. Can you believe that? A roof that does not protect us from the rain.

Furthermore, the children in our neighborhood are not being accepted at the schools. They are not being accepted at the schools in Santa Teresita, Las Mananitas, and other schools in the area. We are very worried about this situation. [end recording]

What made matters more to the Chorrillo refugees was that the executive branch sent an official from the Secretary of the Presidency Office, without power to make decisions, to hear their complaints. All the official could do was listen. Members of the Public Force, most of them in civilian clothes, had to use tear gas to clear the road. During the worst moment of the disturbance, our reporters tried to reach the main site. The sergeant you see on the screen, however, a member of the Traffic Police, kept us from doing our jobs and seeing what was really happening.

Olmedo Guillen, representative for the Juan Diaz area, arrived on the scene later. After speaking to the Chorrillo refugees, a commission which would accompany him to the Presidential Palace was formed.

Alleged M-20 Rebels Hijack Bus in Cermeno Area

PA1303194791 Panama City EL DIARIO INDEPENDIENTE in Spanish 13 Mar 91 p 23

[Text] Panama, 12 March (EDI)—The existence of guerrilla groups in Panama has again appeared with the armed assault of a Panama City-David passenger bus in Campana, a community that is 50 km to the West of Panama City, at approximately 0100 on 12 March.

A Terminales David-Panama company spokesman reported to EL DIARIO INDEPENDIENTE that the passengers on bus number 28, which was going to David, Chiriqui, were hijacked by six men armed with AK-47 assault rifles and hand grenades.

Adolfo Candanedo, the driver of the hijacked bus said: "The men were heavily armed and worked in combination with three of the passengers in the bus. They stole the belongings of all the occupants in the vehicle, but nobody was wounded."

One of the assailants stated that the operation was an action by a rebel group calling itself M-20, which is trying to topple the goverment of President Guillermo Endara.

A witness told EL DIARIO INDEPENDIENTE that one of the alleged terrorists "slapped a man, presumably of U.S. origin, amid hysteric shouts and nervousness." The criminal "M-20 guerrillas" shouted political slogans and, threatening all the passengers with their grenades and machine guns, proceeded to strip the passengers of their jewels and cash.

A similar event occurred last week. Assistant District Attorney Carlos Herrera Moran told EL DIARIO INDEPENDIENTE then that he had received a telephone call at the Attorney General's Office from an unidentified person, who lied when he said that a bomb had been placed in the Attorney General's Office. The person then proceeded to shout slogans "condemning President Endara and favoring the return of former General Manuel Antonio Noriega."

A few days after this incident, three unidentified people, armed with guns, hijacked a passenger bus near the Canal area. On 12 March, the police reported that on 11 March a group of unidentified people had started shooting near the residence of PTJ [Judicial Technical Police] Director Oswaldo Fernandez.

Argentina

Saudi King Thanks Navy for Participation in Gulf

PY1403034491 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0316 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Buenos Aires, 12 Mar (TELAM)—Saudi King Fahd bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz al Sa'ud has thanked President Carlos Menem for Argentina's participation in the recent Persian Gulf war which had a positive influence on the success of the Desert Storm operation.

In a letter, which was disclosed today by the office of the presidential spokesman, King Fahd referred to the success of international law [words indistinct] the freeing of Kuwait.

In his letter to Menem, King Fahd says: In my name and that of the people and Government of Saudi Arabia I voice my deep gratitude and appreciation for your praiseworthy response.

In this context, the Saudi king mentions the support the Argentine Navy gave the Saudi forces, thus helping them fulfill their mission of defending the law and protecting their territory.

Further down the letter addressed to President Menem states: Your sincere attitude has had a positive impact on the success of the Desert Storm.

After praising the high spirit and the significant fighting capacity of the Argentine Armed Forces, King Fahd conveys to President Menem and, through him, to the people and government of the friendly Argentine Republic his best wishes and hopes for sustained progress, development, safety, and stability.

At the end of his letter from Riyadh, the king expresses his deep appreciation to the Argentine chief of state.

Di Tella Comments on Visits, Security System

PY1403033091 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0144 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Excerpt] Buenos Aires, 13 Mar (TELAM)—Foreign Minister Guido di Tella has stressed that in Chile and Bolivia his expectations were really surpassed due to the great willingness that we found on the subject of integration, and he announced that progress is being made regarding the creation of a regional national security system between the Southern Cone countries.

After his return from a brief visit to those two countries, Di Tella emphasized that we have found great enthusiasm regarding the implementation of the regional integration project, to such an extent that our expectations were really surpassed due to the positive position that we found both in Chile and Bolivia.

Regarding a possible regional security system, the foreign minister indicated that it would imply a control of nuclear matters and this is why feelers are being put out to reform the Tlatelolco Treaty on nuclear nonproliferation.

Di Tella maintained that Brazil, Argentina, and Chile have ratified a reformed Tlatelolco Treaty in order to guarantee that the nuclear secrets of their industries for peaceful ends are not revealed.

During this trip Di Tella prepared the visit of Chilean President Patricio Aylwin to Argentina at the end of July or beginning of August, and when he returned to Buenos Aires he announced that President Carlos Menem will visit La Paz at the end of June to hold talks with Bolivian President Jaime Paz Zamora.

Di Tella indicated that with this trip to the neighboring country he was able to express that the policy of Argentina's clear alignment with the new world order will not harm relations with sister countries; on the contrary, it strengthens Argentina's desire for integration. [passage omitted]

Bolivia

Interior Ministry Denies Telephone Tapping

PY1303201091 La Paz Radio Fides Network in Spanish 1100 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Interior Ministry Under Secretary Raul Loayza has telephoned La Hora del Pais radio program to convey the denial of the interior minister concerning the alleged tapping of the phones used by the mass media, and political and labor union leaders in La Paz.

Loayza has guaranteed La Paz residents and political leaders that the Interior Ministry has never tapped telephone lines, adding that this Ministry has always observed the laws and the Constitution.

Despite Loayza's formal statement, however, it has been learned that high-ranking Interior Ministry officials leave their offices and residences when they want to make delicate telephone calls.

It was not possible to ascertain why these officials use different telephone lines than those assigned to them to fulfill their duties.

Interior Minister Resigns Under U.S. 'Pressure'

LD1303222291 Madrid EFE in English 2213 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] La Paz, March 13 (EFE)—Bolivian Interior Minister Guillermo Capobianco resigned Wednesday, a week after U.S. officials accused him of receiving funds from drug traffickers, government officials said.

The officials at his ministry said Capobianco had handed in his resignation to President Jaime Paz Zamora because of pressure from the United States.

Last week THE MIAMI HERALD newspapers quoted unnamed U.S. government officials as saying the minister had until recently received sums of money from important Bolivian drug trafficking groups.

Capobianco on Resignation

PY1403023091 La Paz La Red Panamericana in Spanish 0000 GMT 14 Mar 91

[Excerpts] This afternoon Interior Minister Guillermo Capobianco submitted his irrevocable resignation in a letter addressed to the president.

This is the third resignation in 10 days that the government has suffered due to a U.S. newspaper's charges regarding local authorities' alleged links with drug trafficking. The allegations were picked up by the local media.

U.S. Embassy objections to the naming of Colonel Faustino Rico Toro as the commander of the Special Antinarcotics Force caused him to resign just a few days after he was installed in his post.

Later, on Tuesday, General Felipe Carvajal, commander of the Bolivian Police, also asked to be relieved, and less than 24 hours later the interior minister himself resigned.

On reviewing the successes against drug trafficking, the minister referred to the suspicious campaign of charges that were started by [words indistinct] to the U.S. media.

In his letter to the president, Capobianco indicates that authorized spokesmen announced that the U.S. Congress and the State Department had refuted the charges. My honor therefore remains intact, the minister stresses.

The news of his resignation was confirmed by Capobianco in Government House after a very long meeting he had with President Jaime Paz Zamora.

[Begin Capobianco recording] Evidently, and as you already knew, I have submitted my letter of my irrevocable resignation to the president. [end recording] [passage omitted]

After meeting with the president at Government House, Capobianco held a news conference in his office to explain the motives for his decision.

He stated that he had carried out his duty and that events will surely support his assertions. He also indicated that the charges have not been proven and that the only U.S. authorities that [words indistinct] of a Miami newspaper on the alleged corruption of some Bolivian authorities.

There has also been an important meeting of another U.S. congressional subcommittee in which an important DEA official participated. This high-ranking DEA chief has stated that he does not have any knowledge of charges against any Bolivian official.

Paz Zamora is studying the situation and will choose Capobianco's successor within the next few hours.

[Madrid EFE in Spanish at 0133 GMT on 14 March, in a similar report, adds: "The letter that Capobianco submitted today to Paz Zamora expreses his recognition that 'the highest spheres of the U.S. Government, beginning with U.S. President George Bush, understand all that has been done here and they value it, even despite the rumors that emerge from the lower echelons of the Bush administration.' This is the only reference that Capobianco makes to the 'leaks' to the press regarding alleged corruption."]

Opposition Parties Summon Paz To 'Avert' Crisis

PY1303230491 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 11 Mar 91 p 1

[Text] The heads of the opposition parties represented in Congress have urged President Jaime Paz Zamora to "avert" the political-institutional crisis that is plaguing the country.

In a document signed by the leaders of the MNR [Nationalist Revolutionary Movement], Condepa [Conscience of the Fatherland], MBL [Free Bolivia Movement], the chief of state is "vehemently" urged to "fully exercise the authority vested upon him" to solve "a crisis that results from a political mistake that must be solved for the wellbeing of the country, for democracy, and for the government itself."

It was stated during a news conference last night that the opposition parties' appeal was prompted by the Patriotic Agreement's decision to reject the suspension of the jurisdictional measures [medidas jurisdiccionales]—which suspends functions and bans people from leaving the country—against eight court justices who are being impeached by the senate.

In the opinion of the opposition parties, any juridical solution to the impeachment entails the return of the eight justices to Sucre to resume their functions.

Last Friday, 11 March, the Political Council of the Patriotic Agreement (COPAP), headed by Hugo Banzer Suarez, ratified its decision to continue the trial until the Supreme Court justices are sentenced and, therefore, maintain their suspension.

This decision, according to the opposition leaders, violates the Constitution and the agreement signed on 5 February. In this agreement the government and opposition agreed to channel the trial through the judicial branch.

In view of this situation, the document points out "the seriousness of the threats that are haunting" the country. Moreover, it labels the governing parties' decision as "fanciful and a maneuver that may jeopardize democracy."

The opposition leaders also point out that the governing parties' attitude represents "a rupture of the political agreement, the collapse of the institutional system, a deterioration of the government's legitimacy, and the collapse of democracy."

The opposition parties end by rejecting the governing coalition's attempt to "associate" the electoral law reforms with the Supreme Court problem.

Argentine, Bolivian Ministers Call For Disarmament

PY1403031891 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1918 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] La Paz, 13 Mar (EFE)--At the conclusion of a four-hour meeting, Argentina Foreign Minister Guido di

Tella and Bolivian Foreign Minister Carlos Iturralde expressed today in La Paz that the Southern Cone nations must talk about disarmament and not about arms races.

Di Tella, who arrived in La Paz on 12 March within the framework of a trip to neighboring countries, said: "We want to make progress on a regional security policy within the Southern Cone, in which disarmament will be discussed, not arms races."

The Argentine foreign minister's remarks come at a time when the Argentine media are commenting on a possible "military security" agreement in the Southern Cone that will be signed by Argentina, Brazil, and Chile.

Di Tella said: "We cannot continue to live with yesterday's memories of archaic rancor and bad habits." This was supported by his Bolivian colleague, although he did not hesitate to note that "it would be desirable for Bolivia and Chile to hold talks about the overall maritime problem," referring to Bolivia's 100-year demand for a sea outlet.

The Buenos Aires media report today that the possible defense agreement between Argentina, Brazil, and Chile could set the basis for a consultation system between the armed forces of the three countries in order to create a mechanism of cooperation for the region's defense.

During a news conference, the Argentine and Bolivian ministers announced that Argentine President Carlos Menem will visit Bolivia on 15 and 16 June 1991.

Today in La Paz Di Tella and Iturralde signed the "act that installed the Permanent Binational Integration Council [Consejo Permanente de Integracion Binacional]" in which they express their desire to "strengthen mutual cooperation and to promote bilateral integration as paths toward the implementation of Latin American integration."

The two-page document outlines the functions of the top posts of the two foreign ministries and of the committees of the Permanent Council in the task of improving and complementing economic and trade relations.

*** Political Accord Signed; Party Leaders Comment**

*** Text of Accord**

91SM0216A La Paz HOY in Spanish 6 Feb 91 p 8

[Text] Under the title "The Political Parties to the Nation," a specific immediately relevant political agreement was signed and delivered yesterday. It was entered into by the leaders of the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR), Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada; the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), Oscar Eid Franco; Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN), Hugo Banzer Suarez; the Free Bolivia Movement (MBL), Antonio Arabibar Quiroga; and Conscience of the Fatherland (CONDEPA), Carlos Palenque Aviles.

The text of the document is as follows:

On 25 and 26 July 1989, the leaders of Nationalist Democratic Action, the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement, and the MIR-New Majority signed two documents at the Apostolic Nunciature for the purpose of finding solutions in connection with improving the democratic process.

Beginning in December 1990, all parties represented in the legislature held meetings in order to resolve a number of national problems through dialogue and consensus.

After several weeks of dialogue, and as a result of a calm and careful analysis, the representatives of those political parties have decided to sign this document.

1. Electoral System

The following reforms in the current electoral system are to be submitted to the present legislature for approval:

a) Composition of the Courts. The National Electoral Court shall consist of five regular justices. One shall be appointed by the executive branch, and four shall be representatives of the legislative branch, elected by the National Congress by a ⅔ majority of all voting members. Alternates shall be elected in the same manner.

The Departmental Electoral Courts shall have a similar composition and shall be elected in the same manner.

b) Voting procedure in the Courts. In jurisdictional cases where judgment is final, the Electoral Courts' decisions shall be made by a ⅔ majority of all voting members. In administrative matters, decisions shall be made by absolute majority.

c) Mechanism for honoring votes. The voting results reported in the Records of the Electoral Boards shall be honored.

The Electoral Courts shall not change the Records of the Electoral Boards on their own initiative.

The parties' right to appeal the Voting Records is recognized. For this purpose, the following are established as the sole grounds for invalidation:

i) When the Canvass Record is signed by jurors not designated by the notary, judge, or Departmental Electoral Court.

ii) When they do not contain the signatures of the chairman and secretary of the Electoral Jury, or of at least three jurors, among whom the chairman or secretary may be included. A juror's fingerprint shall be admissible.

iii) When they are drawn up on forms not approved by the National Electoral Court.

iv) When the Board has operated in a place other than that indicated by the Departmental Electoral Court without its authorization.

Voting in the district where a Canvass Record has been invalidated shall be repeated within four days following the date of invalidation by the corresponding Electoral Court.

The autonomy, independence, and impartiality of the electoral bodies established by Article 225 of the Political Constitution of the State shall be guaranteed.

d) Representation of minorities. To guarantee the unequivocal interpretation of legislation regarding the participation of political minorities, the D'Hont formula (odd divisors) shall be applied.

e) Single National Registry (RUN) and Civil Registry. The political parties agreed to propose to the executive branch the amendment of Article 4 of D.S. 22601 of 20 September 1990, to provide that the Directorate of the Single National Registry be made up of the interior minister or his representative, who will serve as chairman of the Directorate; a representative of each of the legislative delegations elected by each of the presidential candidacies in the immediately preceding national election; a representative of the National Electoral Court; a representative of the Episcopal Conference of Bolivia; and the national executive director of the Operative Unit of the RUN, who will serve as secretary of the Directorate.

The national director of identification and the director general of the Civil Registry shall serve as advisers to the Implementing Unit of the Single National Registry system, at its two levels. During the course of this year, regulations shall be issued and enforced with respect to the manner and terms under which Article 1521 of the Civil Code will be applied with regard to the judicial branch's authority over the Civil Registry.

2. Decentralization Process

The parties have reaffirmed their desire to deal with the decentralization process, within the framework set forth in the Political Constitution of the State, to strengthen the unity and integrity of the Republic and to ensure the harmonious development of the regions that make up the Bolivian nation.

3. Judicial Branch

The political parties signing this document have confirmed their determination to seek all necessary means to affirm the dignity and independence of the judicial branch.

For this reason, they have agreed that the lawsuit filed against eight magistrates of the Supreme Court shall be processed and resolved pursuant to current legal norms, and that the task of unifying the judicial system and reforming the Law on Judicial Organization shall be undertaken, creating a suitable system for drawing up lists of candidates and electing national magistrates at the appropriate time.

* Party Leaders Comment

91SM0216B La Paz HOY in Spanish 6 Feb 91 pp 8, 9

[Text]

IU Expresses Satisfaction

The United Left (IU) expressed its satisfaction with the specific political agreement reached by the principal political forces in the country, even though the IU was excluded from the arrangement at the last minute, stated IU leader Gregorio Lanza yesterday.

He said that the difference of opinion that had kept the MNR [Revolutionary Nationalist Movement] from joining in the "Patriotic Accord" was over power quotas, but that it appears to be more open-minded in its actions now.

"It is a positive agreement for the country, which is moving toward improving its electoral system. As a result, there will be a guarantee of better general or municipal elections than were conducted in the past," he declared.

The existence of more appropriate electoral and departmental courts will restore the public's faith in the validity of democracy. It will also increase their confidence that the hallmark of democracy, elections, can be carried out openly and with complete honesty.

When asked about the D'Hont system of legislative allocation that is to be introduced in the Electoral Law, he said that he agrees with it because it will ensure that the popular will, as expressed at the polls, will not be manipulated. He indicated that the IU does not feel excluded from the agreement because it has constantly insisted on the improvement of electoral legislation, and the current pact is oriented toward that.

Lanza asserted that any step taken to strengthen the democratic system is welcome.

MIR: Accord 'Highly Beneficial'

"The time we have invested in this work is completely justified by the results, which are highly beneficial, especially for the country and for the process and institutionalization of our democracy," stated MIR [Movement of the Revolutionary Left] leader Oscar Eid, referring to the document signed yesterday.

He said that on the basis of this document and the dialogue that has been resumed, there is a much greater potential for solving all the problems that may arise as the country moves toward democratic life.

"We are fully convinced that the electoral power that will emerge from these agreements will eventually attain its highest point and will open up new avenues regarding the content of electoral progress. This is because it will mean not only that we have electoral power, but above all that we have an electoral authority with electoral credibility, with confidence and openness," stated Eid.

He declared that what has been accomplished is of broad scope and vision. "I hope that we are all equal to what we have signed here, that our democracy will be more secure from now on, and that the political class will step up to this great challenge. We could call this the hour of the citizen," he asserted.

Eid indicated that this is the hour of the citizen, rather than of the political parties, because when one speaks of democracy, if one knows how to put it into practice, it will be possible to reach the level of a veritable revolution. That will enable us to enter the 21st Century in the process of putting together a democracy that all of us Bolivians are building. "The MIR has signed this document and has

pledged its word, and we will be able to honor our commitment at all times," he concluded.

Palenque: Country Emerges a Winner

The national leader of Conscience of the Fatherland (CONDEPA), Carlos Palenque Aviles, declared that the only winner is the country, not the political parties, referring to the fact that the MNR and the MBL [Free Bolivia Movement] have signed an agreement to change and improve electoral legislation, known as the "Patriotic Accord."

"For those of us who have been interested in making the dialogue a reality, for those of us who have sought anxiously and desperately, this is a historic development. Finally, before the eyes of the entire nation, we party leaders are sitting at the same table," he stated.

He said that it is highly significant that, despite ideological differences, they managed to unite in a great effort to solve the problems of elections and the administration of justice, and to discuss the administrative decentralization of the country.

"We were fearful of an imminent failure. The political parties represented here have proven that we have the ability to sign a document that will strengthen the democratic system," declared the CONDEPA leader.

He asserted that CONDEPA will attend any dialogue, whether convened by President Jaime Paz Zamora or any other leader, to debate the great problems of the country as a whole, even though it has different points of view.

Aranibar: Political Accord Will Prevent Dictatorship

The specific agreement signed by the main political leaders of the country will prevent the emergence of dictatorial currents of any ideological stripe, contended Antonio Aranibar Quiroga, chief of the Free Bolivia Movement.

Although it was assumed that the MBL would not join in the agreement, yesterday it participated in the ceremony held at the Palace of the Constitution (next to the Congress).

He recalled that months earlier, the Bolivian Labor Federation (COB), Private Enterprise, the Catholic Church, the Press Federation, and the regional movements issued an appeal to the political class to find solutions and move toward the reinforcement of the democratic system.

"We are taking an extraordinary step in favor of democracy, because if we had not done this, if we had failed to heed the call of these institutions, it would have been political suicide," he said.

He pointed out that the document being signed is not the first of its kind, but it is currently extremely important because it has the merit of responding to the clamor of civilian society and of the common citizen, who are concerned about their country.

He noted that for the first time in the country's history, political parties of different ideological currents are reaching a positive consensus to improve Bolivian democracy, putting it above their own interests.

He declared that the central point of the inter-party compromise is the elimination of authoritarian impulses, no matter where they come from, as they have "now been defeated."

Aranibar added that the MBL is overjoyed and pleased to salute the accord signed with the MNR, ADN [Nationalist Democratic Action], MIR, and CONDEPA.

Banzer: Prominent Citizens to Serve in Courts

"After signing this document, I would like to reaffirm my pledge to the Bolivian people that the Electoral Courts will be made up of prominent citizens who will accept this task on behalf of the country, and who will have no political ties that might interfere with their functions," stated ADN leader Hugo Banzer Suarez.

He emphasized the importance of the document signed by the five political parties represented in the legislature, explaining that this is a new indication of the political will to overcome problems and solidify democracy in the country.

He said that the people can now feel confident in the political situation and that better days lie ahead. He argued that if short-term and deep-rooted problems can be solved, important steps can also be taken to develop democratic life significantly.

Banzer Suarez added that the political class has the ability to engage in dialogue and the political will to reach agreements that affect national life. The modernization of the government includes a number of phases, he said, and this process requires the joint effort of party leaders and activists as well as the citizenry in general.

"This is a series of developments aimed at achieving an objective, and in this case, specifically in this political accord, this process is aimed at changing and modernizing the government. We hope that the devaluation of the political class that has become evident recently in the life of the republic can be reversed by events of this nature, where the love of country and the desire to serve the Fatherland stand out above all," he said.

Sanchez de Lozada: 'A Triumph for the Bolivian People'

The agreement signed by the principal political forces in the country "is a ray of hope," stated the national leader of the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR), Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, yesterday.

He said that it must be recognized and emphasized that it is a great victory for the Bolivian people, and that it is the fruit of a great effort by various sectors of society which guided the parties to the negotiating table.

"The political class is sensitive to the needs, desires, and aspirations of the Bolivian people to live in peace and democracy. This is proof that we can cooperate and negotiate without at any time abandoning our principles," declared the businessman-politician.

He noted that the agreement is very important, the beginning of a process that is not one of co-government, selling out, or submission, but rather of discussion in an effort to serve the country's higher interests.

"I personally feel, and I hope the entire Bolivian nation feels, that even though much remains to be done, indeed a great deal, we must not forget that a journey of 1,000 kilometers begins with one step," stated Sanchez de Lozada.

He claimed to be optimistic that the commitment of the principal political forces in the country will make it possible to strengthen the country of Bolivia with justice, democracy, liberty, and dignity.

The chief of the MNR said that his party has always been willing to engage in dialogue and consensus with other leaders to resolve the matter of the composition of the electoral courts, to improve the administration of justice, and to ensure the harmonious development of the nation.

Group of Five

Bolivian politics yesterday witnessed the birth of the new "Group of Five" (G-5), made up of the MIR, ADN, MNR, CONDEPA, and MBL. These parties all signed a pact which they hope will make electoral reform and decentralization a reality and reaffirm the independence of the judiciary.

This development means the disappearance of the controversies and partisan bickering that led to the conflict over branches of government, the lawsuit against the magistrates of the Supreme Court, and future problems in holding plebiscites.

The agreement will make it possible for the legislature to move swiftly in approving points that had caused discord before. It is expected to take prompt action on electoral reform, the lawsuit against the magistrates, and the administrative decentralization of the country.

Ceremony

The document was signed yesterday in one of the rooms in the building next to the legislative chambers. The party leaders, Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada (MNR), Hugo Banzer (ADN), Oscar Eid (MIR-NM) [Movement of the Revolutionary Left-New Majority Faction], Carlos Palenque (CONDEPA), and Antonio Aranibar (MBL), took that opportunity to hail the agreement they had reached on the three basic points. All agreed that this is a historic moment in the consolidation of democracy in the country.

The ceremony, which was practically impromptu, was presided over by Vice President Luis Ossio Sanjines, who said that this is a very positive and important moment in the country's life.

He emphasized the good will of the signing parties, and stated that this is one more indication that the political class desires to overcome problems and smooth the way to democracy.

In addition to the political leaders who signed the document, the simple ceremony was attended by officials of those parties, Minister of the Presidency Gustavo Fernandez, Minister of Information Mario Rueda Pena, and deputies and senators.

Outside, a large crowd cheered the leaders, and everything took place in an atmosphere of cordiality.

At the end of the ceremony, after five copies of the document were signed, the political leaders hugged each other heartily. They made it clear, however, that this is a very specific pact that in no way represents an agreement on ideology or doctrine.

Political analysts who were asked about the matter agreed that the parties represented in the government had to give in, as they were "up against the wall," beset by regional, labor, political, and even foreign pressures. They contended that the politicians came to the realization that only a wide-ranging political accord could create a climate of detente, which is much needed at this point.

Brazil

Collor To Launch National Reconstruction Plan

PY1403014891 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Excerpts] The government will release the National Reconstruction Project tomorrow, 14 March. President Collor is polishing up the final details of the national development plan that will be released at a ministerial meeting Thursday at 0800 [1100 GMT] at Planalto Palace.

The plan is called the Big Project [Projetao]. The government claims that it will not be disseminated through provisional measures or decrees, but through broad discussion with all sectors of society, such as representatives of workers, businessmen, producers, economic groups, and especially through the national congress.

On releasing this report, presidential spokesman Claudio Humberto Rosa said the president himself wants to participate in the national debate to discuss the government proposal for a better Brazil. [passage omitted]

Rosa added that the administrative reform that began last year with a reduction by half of the state apparatus, is not included in the big project that the president will present tomorrow. Rosa said that administrative reform, including the reduction of the state apparatus, will continue until the last day of the Collor government.

Economy Minister Zelia Cardoso de Mello said the government project to be released tomorrow is not for receiving suggestions on how to fight inflation. She added that the government intends to discuss how Brazilian society and the economy should be run over the next few years.

The economy minister added that the National Reconstruction Project the government will launch tomorrow is not made up of definite measures. With this project, the government intends to discuss its own ideas and what the

Brazilian economy and society should be like within the next few years. According to the minister, the project's objective is not to receive suggestions on how to fight inflation, for instance, and the government will not stop issuing [word indistinct] in conducting domestic policy. [passage omitted]

Presidents Collor, Lacalle Issue Joint Communique

PY1303123591 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0020 GMT 12 Mar 91

[Text] Brasilia, 11 Mar (EFE)—Brazilian President Fernando Collor de Mello and his Uruguayan counterpart Luis Alberto Lacalle today agreed on the need to find a definitive solution to the conflicts in the Middle East following the end of the Persian Gulf war.

In a joint communique issued in Brasilia following their meetings held in two townships on the Uruguayan-Brazilian border, Collor and Lacalle labeled the withdrawal of the Iraqi troops from Kuwait, which was occupied on 2 August 1990, as a victory for international law.

Collor and Lacalle voiced their hope that the new situation in the Persian Gulf "will decisively contribute to establish a balance of power and security in the region." They implicitly alluded to the need to find a solution to the conflict over the Arab-occupied territories.

The communique states that Collor and Lacalle hope that "the compliance of all UN resolutions will serve to resolve all problems affecting the region, problems that were the cause of the conflicts and that still prevail in the area."

The two president met for four hours in the Brazilian and Uruguayan townships of Quarai and Artigas, respectively. They crossed the La Concordia international bridge on the border between the two countries. Brazil and Uruguay share a 984-km border.

In the joint communique, Collor and Lacalle demand more participation in international markets and the reduction of the protectionist barriers through the accords signed by 124 countries during the Uruguayan round of the GATT talks.

Collor and Lacalle also defended the position of the Cairns Group, which seeks to eliminate the distortions of international agricultural trade caused by the "agricultural protectionist policies and the deceitful competition of some developed countries."

The Cairns Group is made up of 14 GATT member countries: Australia, Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile are among these countries which play an important role in the international trade of agricultural products.

The presidents also analyzed bilateral matters and the consequences for the region of the creation of the Southern Cone Common Market (Mercosur), through a document that will be signed in Asuncion on 26 March.

The Mercosur comprises Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

Common Market Negotiations Over; Agreement Ready

PY1303183591 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 12 Mar 91 p 3

[By special correspondent Guilherme Evelyn]

[Excerpts] Quarai, Rio Grande do Sul—On 26 March, Paraguay and Uruguay will be formally incorporated into the Southern Cone Common Market (Mercosur) that has been created by Brazil and Argentina. The end of the negotiations for the incorporation of Paraguay and Uruguay to the Mercosur was announced yesterday in an 18-point joint communique signed by Brazilian President Fernando Collor de Mello and Uruguayan President Luis Alberto Lacalle Herrera at the border between Quarai in Brazil and Artigas in Uruguay, 630 km southwest of Porto Alegre, capital of Rio Grande do Sul. [passage omitted]

Brazilian Foreign Minister Francisco Rezek and Uruguayan Foreign Minister Hector Gross Espiel have signed a cooperation agreement for the utilization of the natural resources and the development of the basin of the Quarai River which marks the border between the two countries. This agreement seeks to resolve environment preservation problems and to foster industrial and agricultural endeavors. [passage omitted]

Rezek, Roman Sign Cooperation Agreements

PY1403025891 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Today Brazilian Foreign Minister Francisco Rezek and Romanian Prime Minister Petro Roman signed cultural, technical, and scientific cooperation agreements.

The main point of the cultural and trade exchange agreement includes imports of Romanian products to modernize the Brazilian rail system. It also provides for reciprocal visits of scientists and artists from the two countries. One of the three agreements signed also provides for the suspension of visas in diplomatic passports, meaning that Brazilians and Romanians will be not need entry visas for a stay of up to 90 days. The Brazilian foreign minister explains how these agreements will benefit our country.

[Begin Rezek recording] They have to do with improving relations between the two countries in the area of communication between the two governments and with greater commercial cooperation. So far there is a great imbalance in favor of Brazil, and perhaps this will be corrected a little by purchasing something else from Romania, and especially by increasing imports in general. It involves [words indistinct] less than $50 million yearly, while [word indistinct] of $100 million by the end of 1985. [end recording]

Trade between Brazil and Romania is based on imports of spare parts for railroads and heavy electrical equipment such as transformers and some chemical lubricants. In exchange, the Romanians purchase iron ore and agricultural products, namely soybeans.

Chile

Court Links Attack To Earlier Police Reports

PY1403010791 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] The Supreme Court justices have unanimously agreed to reaffirm the concern they previously expressed to President Patricio Aylwin over the fate of the Chilean institutional order. The Supreme Court has stated that the attack against Justice Efren Araya confirms pertinent information that Carabineros Deputy Director General Gabriel Ormeno gave the court.

The Supreme Court secretary read the justices' statement. The main part of the document states:

[Begin recording by unidentified Supreme Court secretary] In view of the evil bomb attack perpetrated yesterday, 12 March, against the residence of Justice Efren Araya Vergara, the Supreme Court, in addition to voicing its solidarity with the previously mentioned justice, repudiates and energically protests this attack which threatens all other Chilean justices and confirms pertinent information received by this Supreme Court from Carabinero Deputy Director Gabriel Ormeno. This information justifies the Supreme Court's concern as expressed in its 11 March resolution. [end recording]

It was stated that the Supreme Court is continuing to study and assess the Rettig report and that the court will in due time disclose its stance regarding the document's observations on cases of human rights violations and the attitude assumed by the courts during the military regime.

Interior Minister Denies Link

PY1403010891 Santiago Radio Chilena Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Report from Government House]

[Text] The link by the Supreme Court between the attack on the house of Judge Efren Araya and the Carabineros' report on the existence of an alleged plan to attack some judicial branch members has been described as superficial, hasty, and dangerous by Interior Minister Enrique Krauss.

This was the immediate response by the interior minister to the declaration today by the Supreme Court plenum. Krauss said that the government has expressed in person to Justice Efren Araya and the Supreme Court its repudiation of yesterday's bomb attack.

Krauss said that he disagrees with the Supreme Court statement that the attack was part of the plan uncovered by the Carabineros, or that it confirms the fear expressed by President Aylwin last 7 March.

[Begin Krauss recording] Despite the respect we feel for the Supreme Court of Justice, we think that it was hasty in establishing a connection between an isolated bomb attack, as it was described by the police because an isolated bomb attack is not meant to cause serious property damage or to affect human lives, [as heard] on the house of Judge Efren Araya and the thought—which we believe to be wrong—that the judicial branch institution is being singled out. It seems to be a superficial, hasty judgment, especially when those responsible for the attack have not been found. [end recording]

The interior minister added that the government has placed all its investigative mechanisms at work to clarify this attack. He said that the connection established by the Supreme Court between the two events is wrong and it does not help to pacify feelings. Krauss said that to connect the situation that the country is facing with sacrifice and generosity through the unveiling of the truth, a situation that is painful for all Chileans, with the attack that took place yesterday is a dangerous assertion.

The interior minister added that the government does not agree that the information obtained by the Carabineros represents a plan of attack against Supreme Court justices. He said that the Carabineros found out that Judges Adolfo Banado and Efren Araya were being followed. As for Araya, Krauss said that one of the men involved in that operation admitted during a questioning session that it was meant to scare the judges. After a long questioning session, the man said that the threats could eventually lead, depending on the circumstances, to an execution. The minister said that this is all the information the government has regarding the case, and it cannot be qualified as a plan to unleash some kind of war between people with different positions regarding the events of the recent past.

Government Denies Existence of Iraqi Investments

PY1203214391 Santiago LA TERCERA DE LA HORA in Spanish 3 Mar 91 p 9

[Excerpt] The government "is not aware" of any investment made by Iraqi President Saddam Husayn in our country.

Interior Minister Enrique Krauss made this statement in answer to a question about some cable reports in this regard.

Krauss said that under the Chilean financial and economic system there is absolute freedom to invest in our country, adding that anyone can do so under the name of a company, thus dispensing with the need to disclose personal identification.

When asked specifically about Husayn's investments, he said that the executive branch is not aware, and has no reason whatsoever to be aware, of any investments by the Iraqi president. [passage omitted]

Colombia

Gaviria: Peace Agreement With CNG First Step

PA1303151691 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] The dialogue issue was President Gaviria's main theme during his first official visit to Pereira. During his visit to Pereira, the president described the proposal by the

Simon Bolivar National Guerrilla Coordinating Board [CNG] to begin the peace dialogue in Bogota as beginning at the end.

[Begin Gaviria recording] We could eventually hold a meeting as suggested by the CNG, but it would have to come after a peace agreement has been reached. We cannot start out from there. That implies a very important and great concession on the part of the civilian society. The CNG wants to appear before civilian society and hold a meeting in the capital of the Republic, like those which have been held in the past by the EPL [Popular Liberation Army] and the PRT [Revolutionary Workers Party]. However, this must be the result of a peace agreement, not a preliminary meeting, before it has been established if there is a real willingness to achieve peace and if there is the desire and disposition to rejoin civilian life. [end recording]

President Gaviria inaugurated the supply plant of western Colombia, Mercasa, projected and planned mostly by his wife, Ana Milena Munoz de Gaviria, as the first private supply plant of the country at an investment of 1.42 billion pesos. The president also inaugurated the annex of a high technology factory for electrical transformers. He was the first manager of the factory when it was no longer a micro enterprise.

Giraldo on Constituent Assembly, Extradition

PA1303170291 Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1800 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Report by Martha Toro]

[Text] The National Constituent Asembly should not discuss the extradition issue. This opinion was expressed by Justice Minister Jaime Giraldo Angel, who pointed out that an international treaty, such as the treaty on extradition, should not be a part of a constitutional text. The high-ranking official recalled the problems the government had had with the Catholic Church when it unilaterally proposed changes to the Concordat.

Giraldo Angel discarded the idea of repatriation for Colombian inmates from Mexican, European and U.S. jails. The minister said that the country's prisons are unable to handle the 32,000 people presently incarcerated.

[Begin Giraldo recording] The information I have indicates that there are some 15,000 to 20,000 Colombians abroad. How can we bring them back, and where would we put them? This is a very serious problem.

It is very easy to say this at a forum when you are not responsible for resolving the situation. For humanitarian reasons one would want these people to at least serve their sentences near their families, but that would create extremely serious problems. You have just mentioned... [changes thought] If we are crowded with those we have, how are we to solve that problem.

It is very easy to speak when one does not have the responsibility of following up on what one says. [end recording]

The official said that the government will soon issue regulations allowing the seizure of all the assets of convicted drug traffickers. The minister affirmed that the majority of Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha's assets may be enjoyed by his family because, upon his death, there is no longer anyone to blame. The U.S. currency found on one of his farms, however, has been turned over to the government because of violations to currency exchange laws.

Report on Debates at Constituent Assembly

PA1303172991 Bogota EL NUEVO SIGLO in Spanish 9 Mar 91 p 7

[Report by Cesar Ruiz]

[Text] The warming-up phase has concluded for the National Constituent Assembly's five committees. Last week, the work was distributed and the first fundamental theses on the change proposals were announced.

First Committee

This committee debated political rights and guarantees. The speeches focused on fundamental freedoms and the procedure of elevating them to the rank of constitutional norms. One of the conclusions was to change Article 121, either to keep apace with public order needs or to simply expunge it out of the Constitution, because it runs counter to human rights. In the midst of the debate, the topic of peace appeared to remind the deputies that amendments must be made in order to be implemented in a convulsed country. Deputy Horacio Serpa made a statement to that effect. He noted that "what we are doing here is meant to function over there where violence runs rampant. The guerrillas persist in their belligerent attitude, and drug trafficking remains one of the issues to be discussed."

Issues such as the political parties, the electoral system, and the statute on the opposition, however, were passed over to be discussed during the course of the debates. Interest exists in opening the framework of participatory democracy in order to make room for new movements and minorities, in other words, to break the traditional bipartisan system.

Second Committee

The organization of the territory gained new, and perhaps unexpected, momentum. That happened because the committee chair worked constantly and strove to arrange the agenda. There is a diversity of proposals but all have the same goal: to decentralize governmental, political, and financial activities. That is how Deputy Jaime Castro viewed it, adding that "until recently, decentralization simply had an administrative connotation. Now, it covers the political and economic aspects of regional entities that stand to gain by it."

Although the election of governors by popular vote is not a secondary issue, it has not become a key one. That depends on the new territorial division that is adopted in the country.

Third Committee

The study of the executive and legislative branches, state of siege, the public force, and international relations prompted the committee to be split into two comittees.

One of the debates focused on Article 120, which refers to the equal distribution of power.

Conclusion: In order to begin economic liberalization, it is necessary that Article 120 be eliminated from the Constitution.

In addition, without reaching consensus within the committee, the figure of the vice president is beginning to make progress. Meanwhile, regarding the Armed Forces, it was proposed that the defense minister be a civilian and the police become a civic organization, not a military one.

The reforms to the Congress on whether it should be unicameral or bicameral, as well as the manner in which it should operate once the reforms go into effect, remain at a standstill.

Fourth Committee

The fourth committee focused mainly on the changes in Colombia justice, through the state of siege decrees.

Assembly members Julio Salgado and Hernando Londono strongly scored and criticized the government position regarding the handling of the drug policy. "It is not right that the country is being given away in this manner. This is not acting according to the law, but negotiating under the table," Salgado concluded.

The fourth committee referred to the work done by the state intelligence organizations, extradition, and the government proposal to reform the justice system.

There are more points of diagreement in this committee than in any other, and the issue of drug trafficking casts a shadow over the debates.

Fifth Committee

The economic development model represents the foundation of this committee and the basis for the distribution of work to the assembly members.

There is nothing clear yet regarding this issue. The committee members have only addressed the issue of the monopolies, without giving any insight on the manner to legislate monopolies and the controls that may be introduced to the market economy.

Public spending, finance, investment, and economic liberalization are on the working agenda for the days to come. International relations and the implementation of negotiations are also on the agenda.

The fifth committee is working on the foundations of the technical and political handling of Colombia's economic structure.

This work will next be supplemented with the proposals and projects that have arrived at the secretariat of the fifth committee, which will be distributed next week in order to begin the work of constitutional carpentry.

Uruguay

General Admits 'Torture' Under Military Regime

PY1303183091

[Editorial Report] Montevideo BUSQUEDA in Spanish on 7 March publishes on pages 32-37 an 8,000-word interview with retired Lieutenant General Hugo Medina. Reporter Cesar Candia stresses his surprise at the "cordial" reception accorded him by this "feared" and "sometimes aggressive" man, who served as the last Army commander in chief under the 1973-1984 military regime in Uruguay and as defense minister under President Julio Sanguinetti.

Medina says the 1973 coup was an action carried out "against subversives and the Communist Party" and that the population at large applauded the action, even though in the final years "there was a very strong rejection" of the military government.

The general adds that "there was no formal decision to turn to the dirty war," that "5,000 people were arrested," and that "there were very few deaths." Medina says prisoners "were captured and interrogated" in order to "extract information" and then sent to prison. He argues that the deaths that occurred during that time were due to the fact that the government was "at war" with subversion.

Medina argues that no one wanted to kill anyone but that some prisoners did die as a consequence "of excesses, because interrogators overdid it, because interrogations were too long, or because of haste" when "the life of a comrade or a group of comrades depended on it."

Medina says that his conscience does not bother him because the Armed Forces were simply fulfilling their duty. Proof of this is the fact that "the country is progressing," which he could not imagine would have happened "if the Tupamaros had won."

The general points out that the Armed Forces commanders sent a letter to then President Julio Sanguinetti explaining "the circumstances," accepting having "lost their frame of reference" for their actions, and agreeing to a possible trial against them, but "clearing subordinates of all charges" because "if you gave the orders, you have to support those who fulfilled them."

In response to another question, Medina rejects the idea that "the 1973 coup was orchestrated by the United States."

He later admits that "nine hostages," including Tupamaro leaders "Marenales, Sendic, Wassen Alaniz" and "Rosencoff and Engler" were given "special treatment to prevent them from breaking out of jail," where conditions were "severe."

Commenting on an incident in which five people were killed near Maldonado, Medina says that the "reaction" was "regrettable" and that it was "a mistake" made by an

individual, not the collective responsibility of the Armed Forces. Medina adds: "Numerous people have been dismissed from the Armed Forces on charges of acting inappropriately."

Medina admits that someone identified as Roslik died in San Javier "undoubtedly" as a result of interrogation. Medina states that neither he, the military division chief, nor the deputy chief were present during the interrogation. He adds that all those present were "tried by the courts, and the chief and deputy chief were condemned for negligence."

Medina says the military had "a plan and a schedule to hand over power" that included a new Constitution, but that the process was deadlocked when the 1980 plebiscite "rejected the constitutional reform." Medina says the "regime's economic failures" and the "aspirations of some Army people who, right or wrong, wanted the military process to continue," made things very difficult when it was time to transfer power.

Regarding some apparently arbitrary rulings during the military regime, Medina says: "All authoritarian regimes usually fall into those kinds of excesses."

Medina also says that if the Broad Front leftist coalition had won the 1971 election, the Armed Forces "would not have handed over power" because "they were seen as what they were: the enemy." Medina says, however, that the situation is different today because the "Broad Front has changed" and now seeks dialogue.

Regarding the Expiration Law, which exempted all military men from being tried for charges based on their activities during the military regime, Medina says that "Sanguinetti would have been disappointed by our refusal to accept any penalty" because the military understood that "we deserved" more "respect and consideration." Medina adds that "we could not stand in the middle of the road" and that "if I did not take charge (stage a coup), if I did not assume the responsibility, the officer under me would have done it, and if he did not do it another officer would have done it, because that was the position of the Armed Forces."

Medina says Congress would have been "in contempt of court" if it did not approve the Expiration Law and that the consequences could have possibly been "negotiation or a bloodbath," because "the country was playing with the Armed Forces' future, with the very existence of the Army."

Medina also notes that the "Armed Forces must always be prepared" to face "internal or external problems" because there are people who have not "abandoned the idea of the armed struggle to take power." He also points out that "sedition can be wrapped in many flags," represented by such things as drugs or Fidel Castro, who will always be "a potential enemy."

Medina concludes the interview by pondering his possible mistakes. He says, however, that everything was done for "the higher interests" of the nation. Asked if torture was a mistake, Medina says: "No." Asked if he ever ordered a prisoner tortured, he says: "Yes."

Officers Protest Statement

PY1303232491 Montevideo Radio El Espectador Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] [Passage indistinct] regarding the statements made by Lieutenant General Hugo Medina, retired, about [words indistinct] continues to prompt reactions among different national sectors.

While the Broad Front congressmen were again criticizing the remarks made by the former defense minister, several military men were asking the president of the Republic to adopt measures in face of the statement by Medina.

(?Five) military officers who were discharged from their posts during the de facto administration today presented a letter to the president of the Republic regarding the statement by Medina to the weekly BUSQUEDA. The military officers consider that the Armed Forces and the presidency have been affected by Medina's statement, and so they have asked the president to defend these national institutions. The military officers think that appropriate measures must be adopted because they consider that the statement made by the former defense minister are unacceptable.

Net Reserves Decrease by $315.5 Million in Feb

PY0903205091 Montevideo Radio El Espectador Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 9 Mar 91

[Text] The Central Bank net national reserves decreased by $315.5 million in February, while the Central Bank internal net credit increased by 548 billion new pesos in the same period.

A report released by the Central Bank points out that the national reserves have decreased almost exclusively as a result of the payments made on the Uruguayan foreign debt.

The national reserves will increase in the next few months as the multinational organizations begin to disburse the loans they promised to grant Uruguay to support the negotiations and the payment of the foreign debt.

Venezuela

Foreign Minister Clarifies Status of Resignation

PA1303200291 Paris AFP in Spanish 0744 GMT 13 Mar 91

[Text] Caracas, 12 Mar (AFP)—Venezuelan Foreign Minister Reynaldo Figueredo denied on 12 March that he had presented his resignation before President Carlos Andres Perez. He hinted, however, at the possibility that he will resign in the near future.

Versions that appeared in today's official media and the Caracas press, which were even reported by the government news agency VENPRES, took the resignation of Figueredo for granted.

Perez, who recently marked his second year in office, is getting ready to reorganize his cabinet and political circles are insisting that he will replace Figueredo.

Within the progovernment social-democratic Democratic Action (AD) party, Foreign Minister Figueredo hopes to be elected secretary general of the important branch of Miranda State, a province east of Caracas that includes a part of the capital.

In order for Figueredo to be able join the election campaign, he should first leave his current position, as was requested by his competitors and prominent party leaders.

Commenting today on the issue of his resignation, Figueredo said: "The president knows about my work in the State of Miranda in my condition of deputy of that region (...) several things that have made me reflect have happened. The presidents should be the first to listen to these reflections."

Although he denied that he had resigned, Figueredo said that it is very likely that he will "soon" register his nomination for secretary general of AD in Miranda State.

Four names are mentioned to replace Figueredo: Armando Duran, current minister of the secretariat of the presidency; Deputy Presidency Minister Beatrice Rangel; Ambassador to Colombia Fernando Gerbasi; and AD internationalist Marco Tulio Bruni Celli.